WORLD CUP AS METAPHOR • GARY YOUNGE

THE Nation.

DOUBLE ISSUE

INEQUALITY IN AMERICA

AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

ROBERT REICH
MATT YGLESIAS
KATHERINE NEWMAN & DAVID PEDULLA
ORLANDO PATTERSON
JEFF MADRICK
DEAN BAKER

JULY 19/26, 2010
TheNation.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE Nation.

SUBSCRIBER ALERT

Dear *Nation* Subscribers

It has come to our attention that several of our subscribers have received renewal notifications from independent magazine clearinghouses doing business under the names **Publishers Billing Exchange** and **Magazine Distribution Services**. These companies have not been authorized to sell subscriptions on behalf of *The Nation* magazine, and we have no guarantee that subscriptions purchased from them will be sent to *The Nation*.

We do use some legitimate subscription services to sell our publication. If you receive a renewal notice and are unsure of its authenticity, please call our subscriber-care department and order your renewal through them.

You may contact subscriber services by calling our toll-free number, **(800) 333-8536** or via the Web at **www.thenation.com /subscription-services**

Letters

'Free Gaza' Flotilla Fallout

NEW YORK CITY

You know, it's funny. Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority are all engaged in this blockade (which I strongly oppose). But if you read *The Nation*'s June 21 editorial, "Free Gaza," you'd have to assume that they are all doing this because it's fun or because they are big meanies or, at best, for no reason at all. There is no notion that any sane person in Israel or Egypt or the West Bank would ever have a problem with anything Hamas has ever done or have any reason for concern if it ruled the country on its borders and had the power to kill whomever it liked by whatever means it liked. You'd never know, either, that it is a regressive, totalitarian, anti-Semitic political movement opposed to liberalism in all its forms, particularly as it relates to women. This editorial, like most *Nation* editorials, assumes Israel is 100 percent at fault in this conflict and that whoever opposes it is 100 percent correct. It is the mirror image of the right-wing Zionist viewpoint it attacks. As such, it can have no relevance to the views of anyone who takes the complications of the conflict seriously in hopes of finding a solution that might one day be acceptable to the country *The Nation* consistently demonizes.

ERIC ALTERMAN
Nation *columnist*

MIAMI

I disagree with every statement and position in your rabid condemnation of the blockade and biased support for the Arabs of Gaza. The gross failure to recognize that the raining of 10,000 rockets onto Israeli homes by Hamas for years and the express assertion of absolute enmity for Israel by Hamas and its commitment to the destruction of Israel certainly entitled Israel to blockade all weapons, just as the importation of rockets into Cuba warranted the US boycott of Cuba. You fail entirely to acknowledge that humanitarian supplies were permitted to enter Gaza, and this brands your diatribe as absolutistic, unreasoned hatred.

MILES J. LOURIE

letters@thenation.com

NEW YORK CITY

It is too bad that the spill of human blood does not elicit the same response as the spill of oil. With oil, there is no question that it must be stopped. With blood, we find reasons it should continue. Only those capable of feeling the pain of others know that blood is thicker than oil. Those are the people who were part of the flotilla, who tried to stop the gushing well of pain in Gaza. These are the people the IDF labels "terrorists."

RON MUSICUS

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

One point has been lost in conversations about the flotilla: Israel continues as a violent and oppressive regime partly because American Jews turn a blind eye to the inhumane acts perpetrated by the Israeli government. Jews who vote Democratic and champion progressive causes are too often the same Jews who support the actions of the State of Israel, implicitly and explicitly, by refusing to acknowledge its failures. If we want a Jerusalem not riddled with mortar shells, we Jews need to acknowledge that we have been oppressors. It is not 1948, and we can no longer use the terrible acts committed against us, or even the grave threats of extremists, to justify the terrible acts of violence we commit.

ELI PLENK

The Editors Reply

The point of the "Free Gaza" editorial was not to analyze Hamas but to explain why the Israeli military's violent attack on a humanitarian flotilla in international waters, and the blockade of Gaza that attack was enforcing, are so damaging not only to basic Palestinian rights but to long-term Israeli and US interests. Israel has certainly allowed humanitarian supplies to enter Gaza, as Lourie claims, but never in even remotely sufficient quantities. According to an Amnesty International report earlier this year, which

(continued on page 26)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation.
since 1865

Battling the Banksters

Hold the applause. The president would like us to celebrate his "Wall Street reform," but the legislation is misnamed. Barack Obama did not set out as president to reform Wall Street in fundamental ways but to restore it. Judging by the largest banks' booming stock prices and executive bonuses, he appears to have succeeded. The leading bankers expressed relief when they saw the reform package Congress cobbled together on June 25. Wall Street, loathed by citizens everywhere, dodged the bullet in Washington.

COMMENT

Congress followed Obama's path and rejected the sterner measures that promised to actually change things. As with healthcare reform, the White House, joined by the Treasury and the Federal Reserve, spent much of its energy opposing more aggressive ideas or bargaining small-bore compromises. The president kept a low profile, saving himself for the victory celebration.

Despite the defeat of real reform, progressives should not despair—the future looks much brighter than the headlines suggest. Yes, Congress choked on the hard questions. But assuming the Dems pull together last-minute wavering votes, it will be a stronger bill than either the White House or the bankers had intended, thanks to public anger, popular mobilization and nimble pressure from reformers.

This is not the end of reform; it's the beginning of a promising struggle to cut the financial sector down to tolerable dimensions and reduced power. The forces of reform demonstrated that they have the strength and especially the ideas to win this fight—just not this year.

Mainly, the legislation gives government regulators explicit authority to take tougher measures to curb Wall Street's dangerous behavior, but only if the Fed and Treasury decide it's a good idea. Don't hold your breath. These same agencies failed massively to confront the rampant recklessness that led to collapse (many of them claimed not to have seen the trouble coming).

Once again, the risk-taking is assigned to unwitting citizens and the economy. Washington saved big-dog bankers from failure, but it has not saved the rest of us from the bankers. Some reformers want to make the best of mixed results. The Consumer Federation of America says the banks "won a few battles; they lost the war." I would say it is the other way around: reform won some battles but lost the war.

Some valuable improvements, like the Consumer Financial Protection Agency, can lead to tougher rules, but even such worthy accomplishments were diluted in the fine print. The supposedly "independent" consumer agency is to be a "bureau" within the Federal Reserve, where hostile central bankers can find ways to smother the infant in its crib.

The improved controls on dangerous derivatives were likewise weakened in last-minute deal-making that gave bankers much of what they wanted—a free hand to keep the casino open for the gamblers. Bottom line: key elements of financial abuse that contributed to the breakdown have not been eliminated. And taxpayers are still on the hook for bailing out "too big to fail" banks.

Yet despite disappointing results, the losing issues revealed reasons for optimism. Think of this as Round One. We witnessed a surprisingly strong preview of Round Two in the aggressive reforms pushed by some Democratic senators. These proposals could someday—maybe sooner than we imagine—constitute the platform for authentic reordering of the banking system.

Page 27: Tacita Dean's camera eye

Inside

2 Letters

Editorials & Comment

3 Battling the Banksters
WILLIAM GREIDER

5 Noted

6 Fixing the Filibuster
SENATOR TOM HARKIN

8 Advice From Saul Alinsky
NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

10 Ben Sonnenberg
STUART KLAWANS

Columns

6 Deadline Poet
A Brief History of General Stanley McChrystal's Departure
CALVIN TRILLIN

11 The Liberal Media
A Conspiracy So Immense…
ERIC ALTERMAN

12 Beneath the Radar
What Soccer Says About Us
GARY YOUNGE

Articles

13 Inequality in America
And what to do about it.
ROBERT REICH • DEAN BAKER • KATHERINE NEWMAN AND DAVID PEDULLA • ORLANDO PATTERSON • JEFF MADRICK • MATT YGLESIAS

23 Holding the Center
To build on recent gains, progressive activists must focus on recruitment.
JEAN HARDISTY AND DEEPAK BHARGAVA

Books & the Arts

27 The Changing Light at Craneway
BARRY SCHWABSKY

30 BORGES: The Sonnets • Poems of the Night
SUSAN STEWART

33 DURROW: The Girl Who Fell From the Sky
MADISON SMARTT BELL

34 Alongside Darwin (POEM)
DONALD REVELL

COVER DESIGN BY GENE CASE & STEPHEN KLING/ AVENGING ANGELS; CARTOON ON PAGE 8 BY JON RICHARDS; ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTOPHER SERRA

VOLUME 291, NUMBERS 3 & 4, JULY 19/26, 2010
PRINTED JUNE 30

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation.

EDITOR & PUBLISHER: Katrina vanden Heuvel

PRESIDENT: Teresa Stack

MANAGING EDITOR: Roane Carey
LITERARY EDITOR: John Palattella
EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Betsy Reed
SENIOR EDITORS: Richard Lingeman (*on leave*), Richard Kim
WEB EDITOR: Emily Douglas
COPY CHIEF: Judith Long
ASSISTANT LITERARY EDITOR: Miriam Markowitz
COPY EDITOR: Mark Sorkin
ASSISTANT COPY EDITOR: Dave Baker
COPY ASSOCIATE: Lisa Vandepaer
WEB EDITORIAL PRODUCER: Francis Reynolds
ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR: Peggy Suttle
INTERNS: Carrie Battan, Melanie Breault, Ian Epstein, Sara Haji, Rosamund Hunter, Stuart Mason, Eric Naing (*Washington*), Aaron S. Ross, Lauren Sutherland, George A. Warner

WASHINGTON: EDITOR: Christopher Hayes; **CORRESPONDENT:** John Nichols

NATIONAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT: William Greider

COLUMNISTS: Eric Alterman, Alexander Cockburn, Melissa Harris-Lacewell, Naomi Klein, Katha Pollitt, Patricia J. Williams, Gary Younge

DEPARTMENTS: *Architecture*, Jane Holtz Kay; *Art*, Barry Schwabsky; *Corporations*, Robert Sherrill; *Defense*, Michael T. Klare; *Environment*, Mark Hertsgaard; *Films*, Stuart Klawans; *Legal Affairs*, David Cole; *Net Movement*, Ari Melber; *Peace and Disarmament*, Jonathan Schell; *Poetry*, Peter Gizzi; *Sex*, JoAnn Wypijewski; *Sports*, Dave Zirin; *United Nations*, Barbara Crossette; *Deadline Poet*, Calvin Trillin

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Kai Bird, Robert L. Borosage, Stephen F. Cohen, Marc Cooper, Arthur C. Danto, Mike Davis, Slavenka Drakulic, Robert Dreyfuss, Susan Faludi, Thomas Ferguson, Doug Henwood, Max Holland, Michael Moore, Christian Parenti, Richard Pollak, Joel Rogers, Karen Rothmyer, Robert Scheer, Herman Schwartz, Bruce Shapiro, Edward Sorel, Gore Vidal, Jon Wiener, Amy Wilentz, Art Winslow

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Ari Berman, Lakshmi Chaudhry, William Deresiewicz, Liza Featherstone, Bob Moser, Eyal Press, Scott Sherman

BUREAUS: *London*, Maria Margaronis, D.D. Guttenplan; *Southern Africa*, Mark Gevisser

EDITORIAL BOARD: Deepak Bhargava, Norman Birnbaum, Barbara Ehrenreich, Richard Falk, Frances FitzGerald, Eric Foner, Philip Green, Lani Guinier, Tom Hayden, Tony Kushner, Elinor Langer, Deborah W. Meier, Toni Morrison, Walter Mosley, Victor Navasky, Pedro Antonio Noguera, Richard Parker, Michael Pertschuk, Elizabeth Pochoda, Marcus G. Raskin, Kristina Rizga, Andrea Batista Schlesinger, David Weir, Roger Wilkins

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, SPECIAL PROJECTS/WEBSITE: Peter Rothberg
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, DEVELOPMENT/ASSOCIATES: Peggy Randall
VICE PRESIDENT, ADVERTISING: Ellen Bollinger
ADVERTISING MANAGER: Amanda Hale
VICE PRESIDENT, CIRCULATION: Arthur Stupar
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Michelle O'Keefe
CIRCULATION FULFILLMENT MANAGER: Katelyn Belyus
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: Omar Rubio
PRODUCER/WEB COPY EDITOR: Sandy McCroskey
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Timothy Don
NATION ASSOCIATES DIRECTOR: Joliange Wright
PUBLICITY AND SYNDICATION DIRECTOR: Ben Wyskida
EDUCATION/COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR: Habiba Alcindor
DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL PRODUCTS: Kellye Rogers
WEB PRODUCER: Joshua Leeman
TECHNOLOGY MANAGER: Jason Brown
CONTROLLER: Mary van Valkenburg
ASSISTANT TO VICTOR NAVASKY: Mary Taylor Schilling
DATA ENTRY/MAIL COORDINATOR: John Holtz
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT: Kathleen Thomas
RECEPTIONIST/BUSINESS ASSISTANT: Elizabeth Berniak
ADVERTISING ASSISTANT: Kit Gross
CLERK: Shavonne Frazier
ACADEMIC LIAISON: Charles Bittner

PUBLISHER EMERITUS: Victor Navasky

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: E-mail to letters@thenation.com (300-word limit). Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

SUBMISSIONS: Queries only, no manuscripts. Go to www.thenation.com and click on "about," then "submissions" for a query form. Queries may be mailed to The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. SASE for poems.

INTERNET: Selections from the current issue become available Thursday night at www.thenation.com.

Printed on 100% recycled 40% post-consumer acid- and chlorine-free paper, in the USA.

In the trenches the legislative battle was Democrats against Democrats (Republican senators were united in opposing everything). These roll calls made visible the deeply conflicted purposes of the party—the awkward straddle Democrats have maintained for three decades. Is it the party of working people or the party of big money? Democrats have for some time wanted to be both, but this year's action exposed the contradiction more starkly and put the two sides into repeated collision.

Senator Byron Dorgan's amendment would have outlawed the exotic "naked" credit default swaps, which let bankers and others bet on assets they do not own (like buying fire insurance on your neighbor's house, then lighting the match). Other Democrats decided to table Dorgan's measure rather than choose between Wall Street and public anger at Wall Street. Dorgan's issue lost big, thirty-eight to fifty-seven, but it won among Dems, thirty-six to eighteen.

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse's amendment on usury would have repealed the federal pre-emption that prevents states from enacting their own limits on consumer interest rates. Whitehouse got thirty-three Democrats for, twenty-one against. Roughly speaking, these roll calls joined old liberals and younger, newer senators against the party's center-right establishment, which is typically closer to financial patrons.

Senator Sherrod Brown's amendment followed the same pattern but on a far more fundamental issue—forcing the largest, most dominant banks to get smaller, breaking up concentrated financial power. Brown won among Democrats—thirty yes, twenty-seven no—though not enough to overcome Republican naysayers. Still, the Ohio senator came away remarkably optimistic about eventually winning.

"We got a majority of Democrats on the floor but almost nobody on the banking committee," Brown said. "It reminded me that this institution was built to protect the status quo—to protect the powerful against the people. In this chamber, we all sing with an upper-class accent, so to speak."

Yet Brown sees the path by which breaking up the banks will be forced back before Congress. "In the long term, we are going to win this issue," he said. "I can't say what the long term is, but the business community is eventually going to be for it." That's because the legislation implicitly awards privileged status to the very largest financial institutions, which means the disadvantages of "too big to fail" will fall upon smaller banks and other corporations. That, Brown thinks, will build the support among them for decisive reform. "The biggest banks get a built-in advantage because capital markets understand, or believe, that these big banks will never be allowed to fail," the senator explained. "Therefore, they get a lower interest rate when raising capital—seventy basis points or so—and therefore businesses naturally want to deal with them. So these big banks will get bigger and bigger."

The logic did not persuade this time around. "The argument against my amendment, implicitly, was, It's a radical thing to break up the banks—we can't go that far," Brown says. "The explicit argument was, We can't do that because it would disarm the country in global finance. That doesn't make any sense. You don't need $50 billion banks to get economies of scale."

Brown's spirit of confident optimism is the model for sustaining reform politics. As he sees it, liberal advocates can win if they

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Noted.

BYRD'S PASSAGE: **Robert Byrd**, who died on June 28 at 92, was born less than a lifetime after the founders of the American experiment. The longest-serving senator breathed his first just ninety-one years after **Thomas Jefferson** breathed his last, and Byrd's transit of the arc of history provides one of the most redemptive stories of this nation's progress. Infamously, the West Virginia Democrat was a member of the **Ku Klux Klan** in his youth, and as a senator in 1964 he filibustered the Civil Rights Act for fourteen hours—decisions he would later apologize for. His evolution began during the Watergate battles, when he turned on the lawless administration of **Richard Nixon**—who had considered nominating Byrd for the Supreme Court—and developed the line of questioning that led to John Dean's explosive testimony and the end of Nixon's presidency.

Byrd's evolution continued in the wake of 9/11, when he became an eloquent antiwar critic of the Bush administration on the Senate floor. Speaking of the impending invasion of Iraq in early 2003, he warned, "We may get lucky and achieve a rapid victory. But then we will face a second war: a war to win the peace in Iraq. This war will last many years and will surely cost hundreds of billions of dollars." Byrd decried the complacency of the Senate, declaring as the war progressed that "the right to ask questions, debate and dissent is under attack. The drums of war are beaten ever louder in an attempt to drown out those who speak of our predicament in stark terms. Even in the Senate, our history and tradition of being the world's greatest deliberative body is being snubbed." The snubbing continues, but those who honor the senator's legacy would do well to recognize the wisdom the founders—and Byrd—saw in saying no to presidents, regardless of party, and especially in times of war. JOHN NICHOLS

THE KING BEATER: NASCAR legend **Richard Petty** is known as "the King" in North Carolina. So when he ran for secretary of state as a Republican in 1996, everyone presumed he was unbeatable—until he lost by more than 200,000 votes to State Senator **Elaine Marshall**. Defeating Petty should have put Marshall on national radar screens, but when she decided to run for the Senate this year, Washington Democrats handpicked their own candidate, **Cal Cunningham**, a telegenic Iraq War vet, to run against her. That plan backfired when Marshall routed Cunningham in the June 22 primary runoff, setting up a November showdown with incumbent Senator **Richard Burr**.

It was a victory for the progressive groups that unsuccessfully backed **Bill Halter** over Blanche Lincoln in Arkansas, including **MoveOn.org** and **Democracy for America**, which supported Marshall. A 65-year-old former teacher, craft store owner and lawyer, Marshall is not exactly an outsider, having served in elected office for a decade and a half. But she ran a savvy anti-establishment, progressive-populist campaign in the primary, defeating what she called "a committee of Washington insiders" by touting her opposition to the surge in Afghanistan and support for healthcare legislation that included a public option and Wall Street reform.

Polls now put Marshall within striking distance of Burr. She gave a fiery performance in their first debate on June 26 in Wilmington, assailing **BP**'s recklessness in the Gulf of Mexico and corporate-friendly trade deals that shipped North Carolina jobs overseas. When asked what Congress should do to prevent another massive spill, an oddly complacent Burr responded, "Whatever we craft to stop people from cheating, we're just not smart enough to stop cheaters." That's not much of a slogan for a re-election campaign—and just as Marshall left Petty in her dust fifteen years ago, she may be gearing up to do the same to Burr this fall. ARI BERMAN

HONDURANS RISE UP: On the anniversary of the June 28, 2009, military coup that deposed Honduran President **Manuel Zelaya**, the opposition took over the nation's highways, overtly resisting the continuation of the coup regime under President **Porfirio Lobo Sosa**. In Choloma, protesters from the **Frente Nacional de Resistencia Popular**, the broad coalition uniting social movements throughout the country, shut down the main highway to the port. More than 200,000 marchers occupied the boulevards of Tegucigalpa, and protesters shut down the nation's main arteries in El Progreso, Santa Rita, Choluteca, Santa Barbara, La Ceiba and Tocoa.

President Lobo, tutored closely by Washington, is desperate to present his administration as a "government of national reconciliation." In February he unveiled, with much fanfare, a truth commission to investigate the coup's transgressions, but it has been largely discredited by the resistance, which marked the anniversary by unveiling its own truth commission. The country's ruling elites want nothing of concessions, even cosmetic ones, and are now turning on Lobo. In May the Supreme Court fired five judicial officials who opposed the coup. Despite at least fifty assassinations of opponents of the regime and more than 3,000 recorded detentions since the coup, impunity reigns, and critics claim the Public Ministry refuses to prosecute a single case.

Lobo's government is collapsing on all sides. The **Obama** administration continues to shore up Lobo and the Honduran military, to its shame. DANA FRANK

JEFFERSON'S HEIR: Senate Judiciary Committee Republicans spent the first day of **Elena Kagan**'s confirmation hearings attacking the Supreme Court nominee for her association with former Justice **Thurgood Marshall**. The civil rights champion and first African-American on the High Court was dismissed by Alabama's **Jeff Sessions** as a "well-known activist" and by Arizona's **Jon Kyl** as embracing a "judicial philosophy [that] is not what I would consider to be mainstream."

Instead of abandoning her mentor, Kagan sided with Marshall, insisting that "the constitutional law that we live under does develop over time," and in some cases "the original intent is unlikely to solve the question…because we live in a world that's very different from the world in which the framers lived." Republicans decried her "expansive" view of matters constitutional. But Kagan has an important ally. "We have not yet so far perfected our constitutions as to venture to make them unchangeable," declared Thomas Jefferson, who observed that "the real friends of the Constitution in its federal form, if they wish it to be immortal, should…make it keep pace with the advance of the age." JOHN NICHOLS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

do the hard work of explaining and recruiting not just among kindred spirits but among normally conservative business interests and ordinary apolitical citizens who don't call themselves liberal or progressive. Both groups are deeply angered and feeling threatened by the swelling concentration of Wall Street power. "It will not take another financial crisis to get back to breaking up the banks," Brown predicted.

A similar strategy is being taken up by labor and citizen reform groups, especially those outside the Beltway, like National People's Action. They intend to aim direct action at banks and focus on people's concrete grievances. That starts with the foreclosure crisis, which Washington has shamefully neglected.

Instead of congratulating Democrats for enacting timid measures, we should show them what we have in mind for Round Two.

WILLIAM GREIDER

Fixing the Filibuster

When people think of the filibuster, many recall the classic film *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. But Senator Smith—the heroic legislator played by Jimmy Stewart—was the little guy using the filibuster to stop the powerful special interests. Today, that has been turned upside down. It is the special interests using the filibuster to stop legislation that would benefit the little guy.

COMMENT

For example, despite record-high persistent unemployment, Republicans have repeatedly used the filibuster to kill attempts to extend benefits to the long-term jobless. Meanwhile, real and threatened filibusters have prevented Democrats from addressing urgent national priorities, ranging from climate change to immigration reform to energy transformation.

The filibuster rule has become an absurd and destructive anachronism. As few as forty-one senators, potentially representing less than 15 percent of the population, have the power to block any bill, amendment or nominee. In other words, America has become a representative democracy without majority rule. Democrats hold large majorities in both houses of Congress and have a responsibility to govern, but they lack the power to pass critical legislation or confirm nominees. The party that was resoundingly repudiated at the polls in 2008 retains the power to prevent the majority from governing.

Historically, the filibuster was an extraordinary tool used only in the rarest of instances. In 1939, the year *Mr. Smith* was filmed, there was not a single filibuster in the Senate. In the 1950s, there was an average of one per two-year Congressional session. By contrast, during the last Congress (2007–08), 139 bills were filibustered. Already in the current Congress, since January 2009, there have been more than 100 filibusters.

The Republican abuse of the filibuster is routine and increasingly reckless. As political scientist Norman Ornstein wrote in an article, "Our Broken Senate," in 2008, "The expanded use of formal rules on Capitol Hill is unprecedented and is bringing government to its knees."

The Senate cannot continue down this path of obstruction, paralysis and de facto minority rule. That is why I have introduced a bill to change the Standing Rules of the Senate to reform the cloture procedure.

Currently, it takes sixty votes to "invoke cloture"—in other words, to end debate on a legislative measure and bring it to a vote. My bill would permit a decreasing number of senators to invoke cloture on a given measure. On the first cloture attempt, sixty votes would be required. But, over a period of days or weeks, the number of votes required would fall to a simple majority of fifty-one senators.

Under my proposal, the minority would have ample opportunity to debate an issue, try to shift public opinion and attempt to persuade their colleagues. However, the minority would no longer have the power to brazenly block the majority from legislating. In fact, my proposal would encourage a more robust spirit of compromise. Right now, there is no incentive for the minority to compromise; they know they have the power to block legislation. But if they know that at the end of the day a bill is subject to majority vote, they will be more willing to come to the table and negotiate seriously.

In this way, we can restore the Senate to the legislative body envisioned by the founders, where the minority can slow things down but cannot obstruct legislation from coming to a vote. George Washington famously told Thomas Jefferson that the Senate's role is to "cool" legislation created in the House, just as a saucer is used to cool hot tea. This role would be preserved.

I am offering this reform proposal with clean hands, having introduced the exact same bill in 1995, when Democrats were in the minority in the Senate. This legislation is not about one party or the other gaining advantage. It is about the Senate, as an institution, operating more fairly, effectively and small-d democratically.

James Madison and his colleagues at the Constitutional Convention rejected a requirement of a supermajority vote to pass legislation. As Alexander Hamilton explained, a supermajority requirement would mean that a small minority could "destroy the energy of government." Government would be, in

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

A Brief History of General Stanley McChrystal's Departure

Commanding General McChrystal,
Mistaking blather for his pistol,
Shot many cheap shots from the hip.
The ricochet from all that prattle
Then drove McChrystal from the battle,
Severely wounded by his lip.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The New York Times

"A GENEROUS, NEARLY NOTE-PERFECT PORTRAIT OF A MODERN FAMILY."

MANOHLA DARGIS

Entertainment Weekly

"FUNNY, SMART AND SEXY."

LISA SCHWARZBAUM

ANNETTE BENING JULIANNE MOORE MARK RUFFALO

THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

MIA WASIKOWSKA JOSH HUTCHERSON

Nic and Jules had the perfect family,
until they met the man who made it all possible.

FOCUS FEATURES AND GILBERT FILMS PRESENT AN ANTIDOTE FILMS MANDALAY VISION AND GILBERT FILMS PRODUCTION A FILM BY LISA CHOLODENKO
ANNETTE BENING JULIANNE MOORE MARK RUFFALO "THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT" MIA WASIKOWSKA AND JOSH HUTCHERSON
CASTING BY LAURA ROSENTHAL COSTUME DESIGNER MARY CLAIRE HANNAN MUSIC SUPERVISOR LIZA RICHARDSON MUSIC BY CARTER BURWELL EDITOR JEFFREY M. WERNER PRODUCTION DESIGNER JULIE BERGHOFF
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY IGOR JADUE-LILLO PRODUCED BY GARY GILBERT JEFFREY LEVY-HINTE CELINE RATTRAY JORDAN HOROWITZ DANIELA TAPLIN LUNDBERG PHILIPPE HELLMANN
WRITTEN BY LISA CHOLODENKO & STUART BLUMBERG DIRECTED BY LISA CHOLODENKO GILBERT FILMS FOCUS FEATURES A Division of NBC Universal

R RESTRICTED
UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN
STRONG SEXUAL CONTENT, NUDITY, LANGUAGE AND SOME TEEN DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE.

BROADCAST FILM CRITICS ASSOCIATION CRITICS' CHOICE

KidsAreAllRightMovie.com

NOW PLAYING IN SELECT CITIES

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hamilton's words, subject to the "caprice or artifices of an insignificant, turbulent, or corrupt junta." I would not call the Republican minority in the Senate a "turbulent or corrupt junta," but Hamilton's point is well taken.

At issue is a fundamental principle of our democracy—rule of the majority in a legislative body. I do not see how we can govern a twenty-first-century superpower when a minority of just forty-one senators can dictate action—or inaction—not just to the majority of senators but to a majority of the American people. This is not democratic. Certainly, it is not the kind of democracy our founders envisioned. SENATOR TOM HARKIN

Senator Tom Harkin is chair of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee.

Advice From Saul Alinsky

Dead almost forty years, Saul Alinsky is still with us. The political genius who invented community organizing is given the credit (or the blame) for such left-leaning organizations as ACORN and the United Farm Workers. Now the election of the first African-American president is often ascribed to him.

COMMENT

But lately it's the rightwardly inclined who are running around with copies of Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals* in their back pockets. During the battle for healthcare reform and its bitter aftermath, the Tea Partyers used Alinsky's *Rules* as a recipe for brewing the mayhem that has won them so much attention. Alinsky has even been made recommended reading by such reactionaries as Dick Armey, who says Alinsky "was very good at what he did, but what he did was not good."

A year and a half into President Obama's term, Alinsky's fame on the right continues to grow while his influence on the administration has faded. Were he around today, Alinsky in his turn might look askance at the failure to create a people's administration, an opportunity made possible by Obama's unique campaign organization.

Alinsky believed that the beginning of everything political was to know yourself and the terrain you were operating on. So he probably would have cautioned Obama that all the power of the presidency—its prestige, that damn bully pulpit, the helicopter and those gleaming marines saluting at every doorway—would not suffice. Obama, who had promised an enormous agenda for change, would not have the power to deliver the goods his strongest supporters were hoping for. Alinsky would have predicted that Obama could not rely on a Democratic Party whose fitful loyalties are shaped by the ravenous conflicting interests members of Congress answer to.

Without a doubt Saul, a battler himself, would have admired Obama's battle to get the healthcare bill passed. Not since Woodrow Wilson's national tour to win US acceptance of the League of Nations has a president fought so hard for a significant measure as did Obama. The attempt broke Wilson's health and that, Alinsky might have said, underscores the impossibility of a president, even such an eloquent and energetic one, carrying the whole load alone. What Obama needed was Organizing for America, the once dynamic, self-starting group of street-level campaign workers that got him elected president but has degenerated into an ordinary political organization taking its marching orders from Washington.

Alinsky would have told Obama that in order to keep his organizational base green and vital he had to make good on his promise to junk politics as usual. Faced with a party that lacks his backbone and a Congress composed of a surfeit of corporate whores, idiots and hateful spirits, Saul would have told Obama he needed a new Congress, one that would make the elected one live up to its responsibilities. He might have proposed that Obama call a People's Congress, whose representatives would be chosen by organizing local, county and statewide groups to debate, set their agenda and vote for delegates to the next level. A special effort would be made to win the participation of those who disagree with the Obama program. The idea, Alinsky would have emphasized, would be a serious deliberative body, not a pep rally or cheering section, a body whose energy and force would come from being owned by the people themselves.

Imagine, Saul would say, thousands of men and women, worried about their future and that of their country, gathering from everywhere, coldly angry, thoughtful and energetic people, learning the ins and outs of the issues, debating, choosing their delegates and preparing themselves to come to Washington to lay down a new way of doing the public's business. The news of such local meetings across the country would cow Washington's political lifers. It would be enough to scare a Congressperson or two into having second thoughts when the next lobbyist came in waving campaign money and promising a fat job for the spouse.

Summer's Here! With this issue, we begin our biweekly schedule, which continues until the end of August. In accordance with industry audit standards for weekly magazines, each double issue will count as two issues served.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Do you know this man and what he will do on September 14?

You probably don't. And that's too bad.

On September 14 – Primary Day – the New York Democratic Party will pick its nominee for the U.S. Senate seat now occupied by Democratic Senator Charles Schumer. Schumer expects to get the nomination *unopposed*. And why not?

He is arguably the most powerful Democratic politician in America. He's got $21 million in his campaign chest *before the campaign has even started*. He raised millions in corporate cash for the Democratic campaign that put Obama in the White House with a 60-seat Senate majority. Schumer is also the party's shrewdest legislative tactician, knows banking and finance inside and out, may have the highest IQ in the Senate (not much of a compliment), and is a model "KODAK-minute" family man, with nary a whiff of scandal.

Senator Charles Schumer: smart dresser, shameful record

So – what's not to like? Why *shouldn't* Schumer be the Democratic party nominee for New York Senator? Don't we need *more* members in Congress with Schumer's intelligence, ability, focus and drive?

Yes, we do – *but not with Schumer's policies*. Which (if they were more widely known) would make most New Yorkers gag. ❑ He (still) supports the Patriot Act, and wants to make its most repressive elements permanent. ❑ He (still) supports the Iraq/Afghan wars, and wants to send more troops over, instead of bringing home those already there. ❑ He opposes medical marijuana, and supports the racist "War on Drugs" that has unjustly imprisoned millions of African Americans and Latinos. ❑ As a shill for Wall Street and the banks, he pushed through the "sweetheart" bailout deal that gave AIG billions of interest-free taxpayer dollars so his Goldman Sachs friends could be paid off at 100 cents on the dollar. *(Schumer receives more money from banks and Wall Street than any other member of Congress.)* ❑ He is a zealous proponent of the death penalty, and is fighting to *expand* the number of federal crimes punishable by death. ❑ He is also sponsoring a new federal law that would make it almost impossible for poor people to get cell phones. ❑ If that weren't enough, he has proposed a National ID card that would subject citizens to racial profiling and intrusive "stop and frisk" searches at whim.

Too big to fight?

Bad as he is, Schumer is so powerful that no Democrat will run against him in the September 14 primary. Nor will any Democratic officeholders even *endorse* other candidates (much as they might like to) because Schumer will destroy their own careers by funding rival candidates in their local primaries, and crush them with a massive media blitz. Which means Schumer will be nominated *unopposed*, without ever having to discuss, let alone debate, his anti-progressive record.

But not if the man at the top of this page can stop him.

His name is Randy Credico: longtime activist, former head of the William M Kunstler Fund for Racial Justice – and reformed drug addict. Like Democratic Senator Al Franken, Randy is also a professional comedian. But his candidacy is no joke. Not when it has to be financed out of his own bank account, which last week totaled $4,650. (Schumer, as noted, has $21 million.)

A Quixotic effort? Perhaps. But Randy believes that his kind of issue-oriented, satire-saturated political campaign (think Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert on steroids) can be the slingshot that topples this Goliath DINO (Democrat in name only) from his Senate seat.

So what do we ask ? Not that you vote for Randy (although we hope you will), *but only that you help get him on the ballot.* For that, he needs 15,000 Democratic signatures (really 30,000, to fend off challenges), which will cost $27,000 to collect, notarize, and certify. We hope you will go to his website and (1) *sign* his ballot petition, and (2) *donate* a modest sum to his campaign, so he can hire enough trained petitioners to collect the remaining signatures he needs. Please go to www.randycredico2010.org

***Reading* The Nation isn't enough**

There comes a time when one must *act* on what one believes to be right. Randy is doing that, by standing up to the biggest bully in Congress, working 16-hour days, and spending every cent he has. We believe he deserves a place on the NY Democratic ballot so voters can have a meaningful choice on election day. Please – if you want to be able to face yourself in the mirror – don't let Randy hang out there all alone.

Randy Credico's Senate platform is:

NO to the Iraq/Afghan wars
NO to the death penalty
NO to Schumer's National ID Card
NO to racial profiling
NO to the Patriot Act
NO to "sweetheart" bank bailouts

Please sign and donate now at www.randycredico2010.org

This ad was paid for by the Alliance for Community Elections (ACE), an independent, non-profit community collective that is not affiliated with any political party or candidate.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The People's Congress would not be an appendage of the Democratic National Committee or the White House. It would have a mind of its own, and sometimes the president might find that irritating. However, because of its independence the People's Congress would not simply evaporate after its deliberations. Its thousands of local organizations would be up and active with energy and enthusiasm to support the president on the programs for employment, education, financial reform and so forth that they agree on.

If the president were to recoil from such an abrupt departure from customary practice, Alinsky, who was as audacious as he was imaginative, would have another piece of advice for him: leaders who get too far out in front of their followers begin to look like they've joined the other side.

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

Nicholas von Hoffman, a veteran newspaper, radio and TV reporter and columnist, is the author, most recently, of Radical: A Portrait of Saul Alinsky, *due out this month from Nation Books.*

Ben Sonnenberg

Ben Sonnenberg loved to read a juicy obit, such as he'd find in the *Daily Telegraph*; so he would want you to be entertained, and have your sense of wonder expanded, on the occasion of learning that he died peacefully on June 24, at 73, surrounded by his family.

OBITUARY

Faithful readers of *The Nation* will know that his name wove in and out of these pages, sometimes in a byline (as when he filed a column about videos) but often within the copy of this or that other writer, who would cite him without further identification. "According to Ben Sonnenberg" was enough—because for many of this magazine's editors and contributors, some of whom (such as Arthur C. Danto) he helped recruit, Ben was a deeply loved friend, confidant, instigator, arbiter of style, source of ideas, connector to people and whatever word Cavafy would have used for kibitzer.

A partial account of how he attained this status may be found in his memoir *Lost Property: Memoirs and Confessions of a Bad Boy* (available right now from Amazon, as Ben would have wanted me to mention). The story of a privileged but oppressive upbringing on Gramercy Park, and of dandyish revolt on both sides of the Atlantic, *Lost Property* takes you as far as Ben's 50s, when his astonishingly refined but radical and playful sensibility, vast network of friends and determination to give away as much of his inheritance as possible (*Property Thrown Away With Both Hands* would be more like it) led to his founding *Grand Street*. For the next decade, under his editorship, it would be the most elegant, eclectic and utterly personal literary magazine in America.

Ben in his glory (details available at nytimes.com). But it was perhaps when he gave up *Grand Street*, and the salon became less crowded, that Ben's deep splendor became most evident. A dandy without snobbism, an aesthete without pretense, he devoted himself during a long and busy retirement to projects such as translating the extravagant Belgian playwright Fernand Crommelynck (because Crommelynck had fallen into undeserved obscurity, and there were young theater artists Ben knew who could profit from him). He tirelessly promoted works he admired (beginning with those of his wife, Dorothy Gallagher, available right now from Amazon). He collected man-walks-into-a-bar jokes, watched *Law & Order* between screenings of Tarkovsky and Sokurov, and mailed his grandsons a three-year supply of whoopee cushions and plastic dog doo.

"I have been amazed over the decades by Ben's unfailing support," Maria Margaronis recalled after he died, speaking for herself and many others. "He sent me things, he praised my work, he tried to get editors to let me write for them; he extolled our mutual friends." And he did all this, during the *Grand Street* years and beyond, after multiple sclerosis had made him a quadriplegic (or, as he preferred to say, a cripple).

He taught many things to everyone who knew him—and not the least of these lessons, which you could learn by watching him command an entire room from his wheelchair, was that there is no such thing as inconsolable. You just have to be as generous, kind, smart and endlessly imaginative as Ben.

Good luck to the rest of us.

STUART KLAWANS

@Nation.com

Faced with the effects of a crisis created by the world's wealthiest people, the heads of state gathered at the G-20 summit decided to pass the buck to the poor, writes Naomi Klein in **Sticking the Public With the Bill for the Bankers' Crisis**.

Senator Robert Byrd, who died June 28, turned away from the unholiest of beginnings to a very long career as one of Congress's greatest constitutional champions. View a slide show about Byrd's life and accomplishments in **The Life of Senator Robert Byrd**.

Recently *The Nation* broke the news that the American hikers detained in Iran were actually seized in Iraq. Richard Kim appeared on CNN to talk about *The Nation*'s investigation, in **US Hikers Seized by Iranian Police in Iraqi Territory**.

Across the United States, the juvenile justice system sends queer youth to prison in disproportionate numbers, fails to protect them from violence while they're inside and condones attempts to turn them straight, writes Daniel Redman in **"I Was Scared to Sleep."**

The Nation on GRITtv: Dean Baker on whether financial reform will address economic inequality; Esther Kaplan on the US hikers detained in Iran; Walter Mosley on political redemption.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eric Alterman

A Conspiracy So Immense…

There used to be a specter haunting the American media—a specter called "Journolist." A by-invitation liberal Internet listserv that grew to 400 members, it was introduced to the larger public in a lurid March 2009 *Politico* cover story asking the question, "Proof of a Vast Liberal Media Conspiracy?" After all, it did not appear on any LexisNexis searches; it had never been mentioned in a print publication of any kind. It was protected, author Michael Calderone observed, by a "'Fight Club'-style code of silence."

The legend grew. Republican flack/*Weekly Standard* blogger Michael Goldfarb called it "a little creepy." Blogger/quixotic candidate Mickey Kaus complained that it was "contrary to the spirit of the Web." A guy from *National Review* explained that this was "how liberal bloggers and major left-of-center voices in the mainstream media work out their message coordination" and speculated about its use as a tool of ideological blackmail. Occasionally sensible conservative David Frum imagined "'secret editors' to whom journalists privately reported, different from and undisclosed to their actual editors" and pronounced it to be "a genuinely sinister enterprise."

Dude, if only I had known… Where, I ask you, is the fun in being part of a Genuinely Sinister Enterprise if all you think you're doing is deleting e-mails about Medicare repayment schemes? Yes, dear reader, I was there (along with at least four other *Nation* editors/columnists). The idea that anyone could spin a conspiracy of media control out of this group speaks as powerfully as anything I've ever seen to a "paranoid style in American politics" (if I might coin a phrase). In fact, nobody on the list ever cleared anything with anybody. Many of us could barely stand one another. People argued over everything, not always civilly. Not long ago, I received an e-mail from another member reading: "I'm starting to understand what conservatives don't like about liberals!" I took issue only with the word "starting."

Personally, the list offered me the opportunity to simultaneously sharpen my ideas, improve my expertise, locate knowledgeable sources and bullshit about baseball. The cost was occasional aggravation and a lot of lost time. (If I had a Proustian masterpiece inside me somewhere, J-List is to blame for its continued nonexistence.) As a collective we held people's feet to the fire, encouraged excellence, bemoaned administration wimpiness and took numerous opportunities to remind *New Republic* editors and authors that they work for a reactionary racist lunatic. This casual cross-pollination of information, ideas and anxieties can only have had a salutary effect on the quality of American liberalism, high-minded journalism and public policy–oriented scholarship.

But as Mr. Jagger sang back in 1964, "It's all over now." A member of the list actually researched its archived conversations to professionally discredit one of its members. Blogger Dave Weigel made some nasty comments about the conservatives the *Washington Post* recently hired him to cover. Undoubtedly it was naïve and imprudent of Weigel to do this. The idea that anything could be a shared secret among 400 people is just plain silly. The comments were leaked first to "Fishbowl DC" and then to Tucker Carlson's new website, The Daily Caller. (As it happens, Carlson had recently been rejected for membership in the group, owing to its desire to remain relatively ideologically coherent. According to J-List founder and *Capo di tutti capi*, *Washington Post* wunderkind Ezra Klein, Carlson "tried to change my mind, and I offered, instead, to partner with Carlson to start a bipartisan list serv. That didn't interest him.")

Weigel was forced out of his job covering conservatives at the *Post* without reference to the quality of his work. Numerous conservatives praised both his fairness and accuracy. As Frum said, "Weigel is a fine reporter. He writes intelligently and insightfully about the conservative world. If somebody is doing his job, he should keep his job." *New York Times* conservative pundit Ross Douthat noted also that "no journalistic standard was violated by firing off intemperate e-mails to what's supposed to be a private e-mail list."

But the *Post*, like so much of the journalistic establishment these days, is extremely wary of this new species of the opinionated blogger and almost comically eager to placate conservatives when they "work the refs." *Post* ombudsman Andrew Alexander lamented that "Weigel lost his job. But the bigger loss is The Post's standing among conservatives." Raju Narisetti, Weigel's editor, explained in Alexander's post on the topic, "I don't think you need to be a conservative to cover the conservative movement. But you do need to be impartial…in your views." Narisetti went on to suggest that in the future, the paper quiz potential reporters: "In private…have you expressed any opinions that would make it difficult for you to do your job?"

This is pernicious Orwellian nonsense. The *Post* tolerates—nay, embraces—all kinds of opinions among its reporters. Was it OK to believe that George Bush would never lie to the country about Iraq, torture or pretty much everything else? How about the fact that a presidential blowjob was somehow sufficiently consequential to throw almost all of the paper's rules on sourcing and verification out the window? Weigel's coverage of conservatives was accurate and intelligent, which is more than can be said of the *Post*'s reporting of either of the above. His private musings are none of their business.

Following the takedown of Weigel, Klein made the unavoidable decision to remove this particular weapon of professional destruction from the arsenal of unprincipled employers and dissolved the list; yet another victory for the culturally toxic combination of conservative conspiracy-mongering and mainstream media cowardice. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

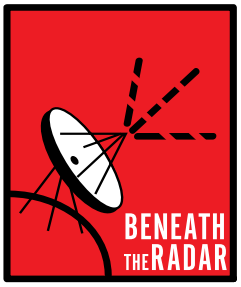
Gary Younge

What Soccer Says About Us

London

They call it the ninety-minute nation. So long as England is playing soccer—a game that lasts ninety minutes—the country exists. The flags of St. George (England's patron saint) are aflutter, the national strip is de rigueur and fans parade in period costume (Crusaders' outfits were all the rage this year). But as soon as the game or tournament is over, the "nation" is no more. The flags disappear; the costumes and strips are folded, washed and preserved for the next game.

Unlike every other team playing in the World Cup, England boasts neither a parliament, state, anthem nor any of the other tropes generally associated with modern nationhood. The United Kingdom, which comprises England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, is very much alive. But England truly gains material form only through football (and, to a lesser extent, rugby). Whereas sporting identity emerges from national identity in most nations, in England it's the opposite. And so it was that on the day England was defeated by Germany in the knockout round, the flag of St. George flew over 10 Downing Street, and by the next morning it was gone—replaced by the UK's Union Jack.



These elements of Englishness and Britishness may appear, to an American, like distinctions without a difference. But on this side of the Atlantic they can be quite acute. Since Labour brought in devolution, Scotland has had its own parliament and Wales and Northern Ireland have elected assemblies that function somewhat like American states. Institutionally, England starts where Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland end. The trouble is, there's no there there. "The imagined community of millions," wrote the eminent historian Eric Hobsbawm, "seems more real as a team of eleven named people." In England's case, our national community is *only* real as a team of eleven named people.

The notion that you can divine a national mood from a country's relationship to its national sporting team can be overdone. When France won the World Cup in 1998, the diverse composition of its team was hailed as a great asset, giving hope that a country with deep-seated racial and religious divisions might find a way to come together for the common good. "What better example of our unity and our diversity than this magnificent team," said the Socialist prime minister, Lionel Jospin. This utopian vision was clearly not durable. By the time of the next World Cup, far-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen had beaten Jospin to take second place in the first round of presidential elections. This year, the squad was riven with racial and religious infighting, sparking a racially charged national dialogue about segregation and a "ghetto mentality."

Sport can only do so much, and as a metaphor it can be crude and problematic. The nationalism it produces can be vile, violent and susceptible to manipulation. Immediately after Egypt won the Africa Cup of Nations in 2006, the government raised food prices. "It was the only time the government thought they could get away with it," argues Steve Bloomfield in his book *Africa United*. "And they were right." After Cameroonian President Paul Biya stole elections in 1992, a general strike was called on the day before a World Cup qualifier against Zimbabwe. Biya announced that if Cameroon won, the next day would be a national holiday. The strike was called off.

Finally, having a national identity funneled through an exclusively male tournament (women's soccer is growing but still has nowhere near the cultural reach) is inherently limiting.

But for all that, the symbolic significance cannot be denied, lest symbols, in the words of George Carlin, be left to the symbol-minded. During a sensitive period in the Ivory Coast after a peace deal had been signed, Didier Drogba, the national star, insisted that one of the qualifying games be played in the north where regional alienation was considerable, and many argued it made a big difference. In England a new generation of nonwhites has started to embrace the national team in a way that was rare for their forebears.

Intriguingly, it is in the country where patriotism is fiercest, the United States, that these discussions are weakest—not because nationalism is not a significant force but because soccer is so marginal. A great deal is made in Europe of this as an illustration of America's isolationism and voracious commercial culture—two halves and too few goals, American advertisers say, leaves insufficient time to sell anything. There is some truth to this, but far more snobbery. The United States has a robust sports culture of its own in baseball and football, and a big enough market to sustain it. But what has been truly stunning these past few weeks has not been the US ambivalence toward soccer in general but the particular antagonism from the right. Glenn Beck lambasted the sport, claiming that Obama's policies are "the World Cup of political thought." "We don't like the World Cup. We don't like soccer. We want nothing to do with it.... I hate it so much, probably because the rest of the world likes it so much, and they riot over it, and they continually try to jam it down our throat." G. Gordon Liddy asked, "Whatever happened to American exceptionalism?" He then went on to claim, erroneously, that soccer "originated with the South American Indians; and instead of a ball, they used to use the head, the decapitated head, of an enemy warrior."

Not for the first time, they are on the wrong side of history. According to FIFA, more World Cup tickets have been sold in the United States than anywhere else in the world outside South Africa, and games have drawn record ratings. Moreover, unlike the English team, on which a fragile national identity hangs, the US team performed quite well, finishing at the top of its group and going on to the next round before being knocked out by Ghana in extra time. With nuance and grace, Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post* headline summed up the right's attitude toward these impressive efforts: THIS SPORT IS STUPID ANYWAY. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

INEQUALITY IN AMERICA

AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

"After 30-Year Run, Rise of the Super-Rich Hits a Sobering Wall." So declared a headline in the New York Times *in August 2009, documenting the declining number of Americans with a net worth of $30 million and predicting that the Great Recession would reduce the staggering level of inequality in the United States. As our symposium suggests, the truly sobering news lies elsewhere. It is not multimillionaires who have been hit hardest in the recent economic downturn. As Katherine Newman and David Pedulla show on page 17, it's African-Americans, low-skilled workers and a generation of young people at risk of being permanently scarred. The downwardly mobile Americans who should most concern us are not traders on Wall Street, which managed to pay its employees $145 billion in 2009. They are the children of black middle-class parents who, as Orlando Patterson notes, are losing ground in a nation where segregation in housing and education is once again on the rise.*

Although they differ in theme and emphasis, the essays here, commissioned in conjunction with the Next Social Contract Initiative of the New America Foundation, are united by a belief that deep, persistent inequality doesn't merely affect less privileged Americans. It affects everyone, rending the social fabric, distorting our politics and preventing America from fulfilling its promise as a nation that offers a measure of equality and opportunity to all. Inequality is also a bipartisan phenomenon, exacerbated by the neglect of both political parties and by a society whose chattering classes have grown oblivious to wealth and income disparities that no other advanced democracy tolerates.

Unlike his predecessor, Barack Obama appears aware of these disparities, telling Times *reporter David Leonhardt last year that prosperity must be spread "across the spectrum of regions and occupations and genders and races." Thus far, however, the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression has generated far more populist rage than ambitious initiatives to make ours a more just and equal society. As the essays in these pages indicate, the urgency to reverse inequality is clear. The question is whether the political will exists to do so.*

Robert Reich

Wall Street's banditry was the proximate cause of the Great Recession, not its underlying cause. Even if the Street is better controlled in the future (and I have my doubts), the structural reason for the Great Recession still haunts America. That reason is America's surging inequality.

Consider: in 1928 the richest 1 percent of Americans received 23.9 percent of the nation's total income. After that, the share going to the richest 1 percent steadily declined. New Deal reforms, followed by World War II, the GI Bill and the Great Society expanded the circle of prosperity. By the late 1970s the top 1 percent raked in only 8 to 9 percent of America's total annual income. But after that, inequality began to widen again, and income reconcentrated at the top. By 2007 the richest 1 percent were back to where they were in 1928—with 23.5 percent of the total.

Each of America's two biggest economic crashes occurred in the year immediately following these twin peaks—in 1929 and 2008. This is no mere coincidence. When most of the gains from economic growth go to a small sliver of Americans at the top, the rest don't have enough purchasing power to buy what the economy is capable of producing. America's median wage, adjusted for inflation, has barely budged for decades. Between 2000 and 2007 it actually dropped. Under these circumstances the only way the middle class can boost its purchasing power is to borrow, as it did with gusto. As housing prices rose, Americans turned their homes into ATMs. But such borrowing has its limits. When the debt bubble finally burst, vast numbers of people couldn't pay their bills, and banks couldn't collect.

China, Germany and Japan have surely contributed to the problem by failing to buy as much from us as we buy from them. But to believe that our continuing economic crisis stems mainly from the trade imbalance—we buy too much and save too little, while they do the reverse—is to miss the biggest imbalance of all. The problem isn't that typical Americans have spent beyond their means. It's that their means haven't kept up with what the growing economy could and should have been able to provide them.

A second parallel links 1929 with 2008: when earnings accumulate at the top, people at the top invest their wealth in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whatever assets seem most likely to attract other big investors. This causes the prices of certain assets—commodities, stocks, dot-coms or real estate—to become wildly inflated. Such speculative bubbles eventually burst, leaving behind mountains of near-worthless collateral.

The crash of 2008 didn't turn into another Great Depression because the government learned the importance of flooding the market with cash, thereby temporarily rescuing some stranded consumers and most big bankers. But the financial rescue didn't change the economy's underlying structure. Median wages are continuing their downward slide, and those at the top continue to rake in the lion's share of income. That's why the middle class still doesn't have the purchasing power it needs to reboot the economy, and why the so-called recovery will be so tepid—maybe even leading to a double dip. It's also why America will be vulnerable to even larger speculative booms and deeper busts in the years to come.

The structural problem began in the late 1970s, by which time a wave of new technologies (air cargo, container ships and terminals, satellite communications and, later, the Internet) had radically reduced the costs of outsourcing jobs abroad. Other new technologies (automated machinery, computers and ever more sophisticated software applications) took over many other jobs (remember bank tellers? telephone operators? service station attendants?). By the '80s, any job requiring that the same steps be performed repeatedly was disappearing—going over there or into software. Meanwhile, as the pay of most workers flattened or dropped, the pay of well-connected graduates of prestigious colleges and MBA programs—the so-called "talent" who reached the pinnacles of power in executive suites and on Wall Street—soared.

The puzzle is why so little was done to counteract these forces. Government could have given employees more bargaining power to get higher wages, especially in industries sheltered from global competition and requiring personal service: big-box retail stores, restaurants and hotel chains, and child- and eldercare, for instance. Safety nets could have been enlarged to compensate for increasing anxieties about job loss: unemployment insurance covering part-time work, wage insurance if pay drops, transition assistance to move to new jobs in new locations, insurance for communities that lose a major employer so they can lure other employers. With the gains from economic growth the nation could have provided Medicare for all, better schools, early childhood education, more affordable public universities, more extensive public transportation. And if more money was needed, taxes could have been raised on the rich.

Big, profitable companies could have been barred from laying off a large number of workers all at once, and could have been required to pay severance—say, a year of wages—to anyone they let go. Corporations whose research was subsidized by taxpayers could have been required to create jobs in the United States. The minimum wage could have been linked to inflation. And America's trading partners could have been pushed to establish minimum wages pegged to half their countries' median wages—thereby ensuring that all citizens shared in gains from trade and creating a new global middle class that would buy more of our exports.

But starting in the late 1970s, and with increasing fervor over the next three decades, government did just the opposite. It deregulated and privatized. It increased the cost of public higher education and cut public transportation. It shredded safety nets. It halved the top income tax rate from the range of 70–90 percent that prevailed during the 1950s and '60s to 28–40 percent; it allowed many of the nation's rich to treat their income as capital gains subject to no more than 15 percent tax and escape inheritance taxes altogether. At the same time, America boosted sales and payroll taxes, both of which have taken a bigger chunk out of the pay of the middle class and the poor than of the well-off.

Companies were allowed to slash jobs and wages, cut benefits and shift risks to employees (from you-can-count-on-it pensions to do-it-yourself 401(k)s, from good health coverage to soaring premiums and deductibles). They busted unions and threatened employees who tried to organize. The biggest companies went global with no more loyalty or connection to the United States than a GPS device. Washington deregulated Wall Street while insuring it against major losses, turning finance—which until recently had been the servant of American industry—into its master, demanding short-term profits over long-term growth and raking in an ever larger portion of the nation's profits. And nothing was done to impede CEO salaries from skyrocketing to more than 300 times that of the typical worker (from thirty times during the Great Prosperity of the 1950s and '60s), while the pay of financial executives and traders rose into the stratosphere.

It's too facile to blame Ronald Reagan and his Republican ilk. Democrats have been almost as reluctant to attack inequality or even to recognize it as the central economic and social problem of our age. (As Bill Clinton's labor secretary, I should know.) The reason is simple. As money has risen to the top, so has political power. Politicians are more dependent than ever on big money for their campaigns. Modern Washington is far removed from the Gilded Age, when, it's been said, the lackeys of robber barons literally deposited sacks of cash on the desks of friendly legislators. Today's cash comes in the form of ever increasing campaign donations from corporate executives and Wall Street, their ever bigger platoons of lobbyists and their hordes of PR flacks.

The Great Recession could have spawned another era of fundamental reform, just as the Great Depression did. But the financial rescue reduced immediate demands for broader reform. Obama might still have succeeded had he framed the challenge accurately. Yet in reassuring the public that the economy would return to normal, he missed a key opportunity to expose the longer-term scourge of widening inequality and its dangers. Containing the immediate financial crisis and then claiming the economy was on the mend left the public with a diffuse set of economic problems that seemed unrelated and inexplicable, as if a town's fire chief dealt with a conflagration by protecting the biggest office buildings but leaving smaller fires simmering all over town: housing foreclosures, job losses, lower earnings, less economic security, soaring pay on Wall Street and in executive suites.

Legislation to improve America's healthcare system illustrates the paradox. Initially, the nation was strongly supportive. But the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

president and Democratic leaders failed to link healthcare reform to the broader agenda of widely shared prosperity. So as unemployment rose through 2009, the public understandably focused its attention on the loss of jobs and earnings, to which healthcare appeared tangential. Consequently, the nation was not as actively supportive of reform as it needed to be in order to weaken the hold of Big Pharma and private health insurers, who demanded that any so-called reform improve their bottom line. The resulting law is fodder for the right, because it won't adequately control future costs and requires Americans to pay more for health insurance than they would have had the deals not been made.

Much the same has occurred with efforts to reform the financial system. The White House and Democratic leaders could have described the overarching goal as overhauling economic institutions that bestow outsize rewards on a relative few while imposing extraordinary costs and risks on almost everyone else. Instead, they defined the goal narrowly: reducing risks to the financial system caused by particular practices on Wall Street. The solution thereby shriveled to a set of technical fixes for how the Street should conduct its business.

Even the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico could have been put into the larger frame of how giant corporations use their influence to capture regulators and impose risks and costs on the broader public, and the central importance of public health and environmental safety to widespread prosperity. But here again, the administration and Democratic leaders failed to connect the dots. The disaster morphed into a technical question of how to plug the gusher and a policy discussion of how best to regulate deepwater drilling.

If nothing more is done, America's three-decade-long lurch toward widening inequality is an open invitation to a future demagogue who misconnects the dots, blaming immigrants, the poor, government, foreign nations, "socialists" or "intellectual elites" for the growing frustrations of the middle class. The major fault line in American politics will no longer be between Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives. It will be between the "establishment" and an increasingly mad-as-hell populace determined to "take back America" from them. When they understand where this is heading, powerful interests that have so far resisted reform may come to see that the alternative is far worse.

A virtual pendulum underlies the American political economy. We swing from eras in which the benefits of economic growth concentrate in fewer hands to those in which the gains are more broadly shared, and then back again. We are approaching the end of one such cycle and the start of the next. The question is not whether the pendulum will swing back but how it will swing—whether with reforms that widen the circle of prosperity or with demagoguery that turns America away from the rest of the world, shrinks the economy and sets Americans against one another.

None of us can thrive in a nation divided between a small number of people receiving an ever larger share of the nation's income and wealth, and everyone else receiving a declining share. The lopsidedness not only diminishes economic growth but also tears at the social fabric of our society. The most fortunate among us who have reached the pinnacles of economic power and success depend on a stable economic and political system. That stability rests on the public's trust that the system operates in the interest of us all. Any loss of such trust threatens the well-being of everyone. We will choose reform, I believe, because we are a sensible nation, and reform is the only sensible option we have.

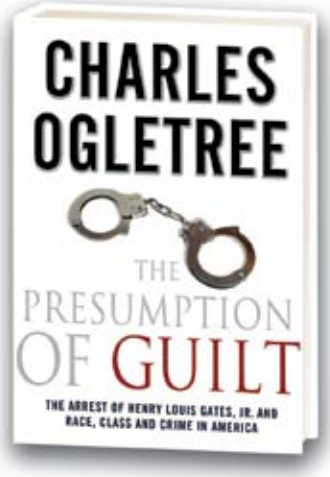
Robert Reich, a former labor secretary, is a professor of public policy at the University of California, Berkeley. This article is based on his upcoming book, Aftershock, *due out in September.*

Dean Baker

The roots of this economic crisis are very much centered in the growth in inequality over the past three decades. This becomes clear once we recognize that the financial turmoil is a minor aspect of the overall crisis, and that its primary cause is the economic imbalances created by the housing bubble.

The financial crisis produced great drama and headlines, as we got to watch the treasury secretary, the Federal Reserve Board chair and the CEOs of collapsing banks stay up late on

IS AMERICA REALLY POST-RACIAL?



With stories of 100 black men's painful experiences of racial profiling, including Thurgood Marshall, Blair Underwood, and Johnnie Cochran

"A brilliant book from which all Americans can learn."
—Alan Dershowitz, author of *Trials of Zion*

palgrave macmillan

Now Available in Bookstores
$25.00 hc. / ISBN: 978-0-230-10326-9 • www.palgrave.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOBODY OWNS THE NATION.

Not GE (or Comcast). Not Disney. Not Murdoch or Time Warner. We are a wholly owned subsidiary of our own conscience.

This independence is why great writers have always used *The Nation* as an Early Warning System—to expose before it's too late the frauds, felonies and follies of the all–too–private enterprise we call Our Government.

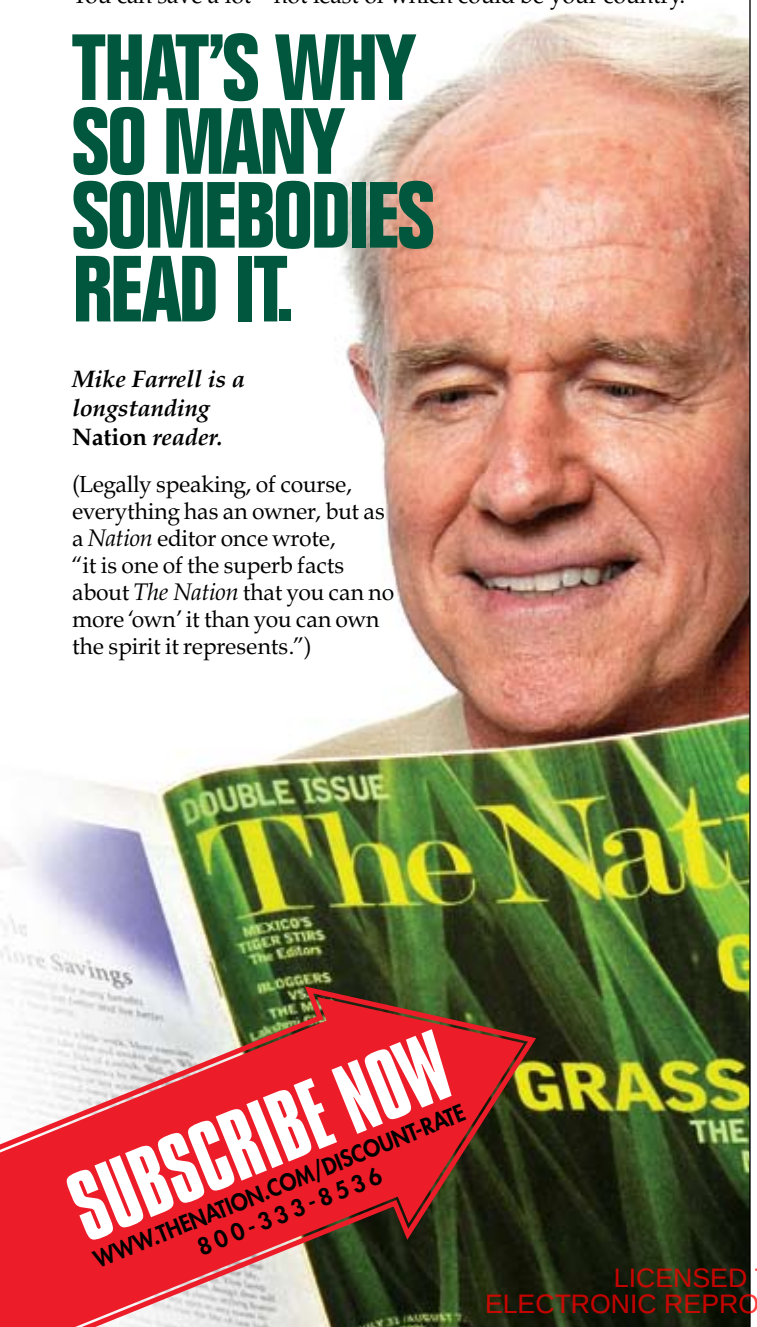
And it's why week in, week out we're read by an audience as illustrious as our authors.

If you believe, as our readers do, that the highest form of patriotism is demanding to know exactly what Government's doing in your name, why not sign on today at this very low rate? You can save a lot—not least of which could be your country.

THAT'S WHY SO MANY SOMEBODIES READ IT.

Mike Farrell is a longstanding* Nation *reader.

(Legally speaking, of course, everything has an owner, but as a *Nation* editor once wrote, "it is one of the superb facts about *The Nation* that you can no more 'own' it than you can own the spirit it represents.")



SUBSCRIBE NOW
WWW.THENATION.COM/DISCOUNT-RATE
800-333-8536

weekend nights patching together bailout packages. However, this show was just a sidebar to those of us who don't work for these banks or own large amounts of their stock. While the Fed and Treasury bailouts were sold as necessary to save the economy, they were mostly necessary to rescue Goldman Sachs, Citigroup and the other big financial institutions.

In the worst-case scenario, the major banks would have been taken over by the Fed and FDIC, leading to more uncertainty in financial markets and a tidal wave of lawsuits. This would likely have resulted in a sharper initial falloff than what we experienced, but certainly not the second Great Depression that the politicians threatened if we didn't cough up the money to save the banks.

The first Great Depression was not just the result of mistaken policy during the initial banking crisis; it was caused by ten years of inadequate policy response. If the government had pursued sufficiently aggressive stimulus at any point in the 1930s, it could have restored the economy to full employment long before World War II forced such stimulus on the country. By the same token, failure to rescue the banks in the fall of 2008 would not have necessitated ten years of stupid policy; a second Great Depression was never in the cards.

It is also important to dismiss the claim that the downturn is being perpetuated by the unwillingness of banks to lend because of their weak capital positions. This story doesn't fit the facts. The capital position of many cautious banks is just fine, yet they are not rushing to make loans and steal market share from wounded competitors. Similarly, large firms have no problem raising capital at very low cost right now. Yet Wal-Mart and Starbucks are not rushing to gain at the expense of the smaller businesses that can't borrow from banks. The problem is simply that consumers are tapped out: healthy banks are not lending, and cash-rich companies are not expanding, because weak demand makes any investment very risky.

In short, the story of economic weakness being the result of a broken banking system is a complete fabrication. This is a good story if your intention is to get more money to the banks. It is not a good story if your goal is getting the economy back to full employment.

The real story is a very simple one of a burst housing bubble. At its peak in 2006, the wealth created by that bubble and the smaller bubble in nonresidential real estate was generating more than $1 trillion in annual demand. This took the form of more than $500 billion in excess construction demand, as builders rushed to complete projects that commanded bubble-inflated prices. It also led to more than $500 billion in additional consumption, as people spent based on $8 trillion worth of bubble-generated home equity.

As much as economists like to pretend to be sorcerers, they have no easy way to replace $1 trillion in annual demand. The Obama administration's 2009 stimulus package went perhaps one-third of the way, but it was nowhere near large enough.

This brings us to the question of why we got the housing bubble in the first place, which goes directly to the issue of inequality. In the three decades after World War II, there were no notable bubbles in the economy. Productivity growth translated into wage growth, which in turn led to more con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sumption. The increased demand led to more investment, productivity growth and wage growth.

This virtuous circle was broken by Reagan-era policies intended to weaken the power of ordinary workers. Wages no longer kept pace with productivity growth, eliminating the automatic link between productivity growth and demand growth. This led to excess capacity in the economy, which was filled in the 1990s with demand generated by the stock bubble and in the 2000s with demand generated by the housing bubble.

If the institutional changes of the Reagan era had not weakened workers' bargaining power, these bubbles would not have been possible. Demand would have kept pace with output capacity. The Fed would not have felt the need to lower interest rates to sustain demand. Furthermore, if the Fed had any concerns about inflation, which in that environment would have been driven by wage growth, it would never have lowered interest rates, as it did in the 1990s and even more in the past decade. Low interest rates alone cannot be blamed for the stock and housing bubbles, but it is safe to say that these bubbles could not have arisen in a high-interest-rate environment.

In short, rising inequality is at the center of the current economic crisis. And since that increase in inequality was not a natural process but the result of conscious policy, it can be reversed. Some of the remedies are well-known. Restoring some discipline to CEO pay would be a great first step. One way would be to change the rules on corporate governance and require that compensation packages be approved by stockholders, where only directly cast votes count.

A small tax on financial speculation would go a long way toward moderating the multimillion-dollar salaries on Wall Street. The tax rates being discussed in Congress would raise trading costs only back to the level of the late 1980s or early '90s, but they would take a huge bite out of profits from the short-term trading at which the Wall Street crew excels.

Trade and immigration policy have been structured to put non-college-educated workers in direct competition with low-paid workers in the developing world, thereby putting downward pressure on their wages. We can instead restructure trade and immigration policy so as to subject highly paid professionals (doctors, lawyers, dentists, etc.) to the full force of international competition. This will help to bring down the pay of those in the top 2 to 3 percent of wage distribution. It will also raise real wages for the rest of the workforce by lowering the price of the goods and services produced by these professionals.

Finally, unions have long been a major force in reducing inequality. Whatever can be done to protect the right to organize and allow workers the option of joining unions will help to reduce inequality.

It is not difficult to develop policies to reduce the inequality that has given us a crisis-prone economy. The problem is getting the political will.

Dean Baker, co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, is the author, most recently, of False Profits: Recovering From the Bubble Economy.

Katherine Newman & David Pedulla

There are long-lasting, durable consequences of entering the world of work in bad economic times. For young people joining the labor force in the midst of the Great Recession, short-term well-being may not be the only thing at stake. Their lives will likely be scarred in important, negative ways for years to come.

We know that those who enter the labor market in times of economic decline are seriously affected. For example, economists have studied what happened to the cohort who tried to find a toehold in the market of the early 1980s, the last time unemployment exceeded 10 percent. Analyzing a rich longitudinal data set, Lisa Kahn at the Yale School of Management recently examined the outcomes for white male college graduates who entered the labor market before, during and after the recession of the early 1980s. She finds that even fifteen years afterward, the workers who had entered the labor market during the recession continued to face significantly lower wages.

Scarring is produced by biographies that are deemed deviant or suspect: long periods of unemployment, jobs with fewer responsibilities than one's education should lead to and the like. We should all remember how hard it is to find work right now and cut future applicants some slack. Sadly, that is not what happens in the real world. Employers have choices in all but the tightest of labor markets, and they don't willingly select people who look like oddballs, no matter who was (or was not) at fault.

The Great Recession is reminding us of how unequal the distribution of damage can be. While virtually everyone other than the top 1 percent is suffering in some fashion, the depth of the fallout varies a great deal by race, education and gender.

African-Americans have been hit hardest by unemployment, with the current jobless rate, 15.5 percent, nearly double that of whites and running almost six points north of the total unemployment rate. These figures are affected by many trends, including racial preferences in the labor market, but one of the key reasons for the disparity lies in educational attainment. Low-skilled workers, defined by high school qualifications or less, are disproportionately members of minority groups, and collectively they have been hammered in this labor market.

In the Great Recession, men have suffered more than women in the employment sweepstakes, leading some to deem this downturn the "mancession." The gender disparity is not unprecedented; during the 1930s, women had an easier time finding and keeping jobs than the men in their families because they were cheaper to employ and the occupations they typically filled did not feel the impact of the Depression in the same way that men's jobs did. Construction, steel, heavy man-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ufacturing—those were industries that men flocked to, and they were all but destroyed in the early 1930s. We are seeing a similar pattern of male disadvantage emerge now, exacerbated by the relative success of women in higher education, which is translating into some degree of protection in this storm that men are increasingly going without.

Most worrying for the long-term health of the American worker is the experience of young people; unemployment for people between 16 and 24 is roughly double that of all workers. The pages of our daily newspapers are filled with the forlorn faces of freshly minted college graduates, burdened by debt, who cannot find work. Their counterparts who have less education are far more desperate. But, any way we cut the deck, it is the new entrant to the job market who is really out of luck in the Great Recession.

Young black men are the most disadvantaged of all in the job tournament, but young workers across the board are in terrible shape in this labor market. And if previous recessions are an indication of what's to come, we can expect these stumbling entries into the world of work to translate into long-term disadvantages, relative to those who come of age in a climate of opportunity.

Underemployment is almost as serious as joblessness for millions of Americans. As of March, nearly 6 percent of the workforce was working part time on an involuntary basis, and the lion's share of these workers are at the bottom of the class structure. Andrew Sum and his colleagues at Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies have found that between October and December of last year, more than 20 percent of workers in the lowest tenth of household income were employed part time against their will; only 1.6 percent of the workers in the top tenth faced this problem.

Even when workers find new jobs, a soft labor market leaves them vulnerable to downward mobility. The Bureau of Labor Statistics tracks "displaced workers," meaning those who have lost or left their jobs because their employers abolished their positions, an insufficient amount of work was available or their plant or company shut down. Between 2005 and 2007, 8.3 million workers were deemed officially displaced. Among those who had had full-time jobs for at least three years and who found new full-time positions by January 2008, nearly half were earning less than they had in their previous job, and a quarter of them suffered losses in excess of 20 percent.

The displaced are at high risk for long-term unemployment, a major source of scarring, and here race enters the equation in pernicious ways. Of the workers who had held their job for at least three years before being displaced, 17 percent of white and Hispanic workers were still unemployed in 2008. But more than 28 percent of the African-Americans were unemployed in the same period.

The social problems that poverty experts worry about—teen pregnancy, high unemployment rates among young black men, low educational attainment—are all very sensitive to the economic condition of the country. Most of these indicators fell sharply or stabilized during the prosperous period of the late 1990s. That golden age is long past, but it reminds us that the dismal situation at play in the current economic moment is hardly inevitable. Good times—labor shortages, high growth, low inflation—create a playing field that, if not level, is at least a fine place for most young workers to start. Sadly, this may be the period we come to remember as the start of a culture of hardship and poor prospects for the nation's youth, who have no choice but to start their careers in a weak labor market.

Katherine Newman is the Forbes Class of '41 Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs at Princeton University and author, most recently, of Who Cares? Public Ambivalence and Government Activism From the New Deal to the Second Gilded Age *(with Elisabeth Jacobs). David Pedulla is a doctoral candidate in sociology and social policy at Princeton who is studying the impact of the growth in contingent work on labor-market insecurity.*

Orlando Patterson

The twentieth-century economic adage that when America sneezes the rest of the world catches pneumonia has a tragic domestic counterpart in the relative economic condition of African-Americans. What for white Americans is a Great Recession amounts to a virtual depression for a substantial number of African-Americans. Unemployment rates stood at 15.5 percent in May, compared with the overall national rate of 9.7 percent. For black men the situation is almost as desperate as during the nadir of the Great Depression of the 1930s: more than one in six is unemployed, compared with the national average of 9.8 percent; among black teenagers, many of whom are out of school and seeking full employment, the rate stands at a shocking 38 percent.

The unemployment figures reflect only part of a broader pattern of socioeconomic disparity between blacks and whites; nearly all indexes—income, wealth, educational attainment, homeownership and foreclosures—show growing gaps and a retreat from gains made in the 1990s, gaps that are being devastatingly widened by the Great Recession. Black median household income, for example, the lowest of major US ethnic groups, has declined by 7.8 percent from its high point of $37,093 in 2000, when it was 65 percent of white median household income. At $34,218 in 2008, it stood at 61.6 percent of white household income. Even more troubling has been the stunning growth in disparity between white and black wealth. A report by the Institute on Assets and Social Policy shows that black median family wealth hardly grew over the past quarter-century, standing at $5,000 in 2007; it is now probably much lower, in view of the disproportionate impact of the housing crisis on black homeowners. In contrast, white median family wealth in 2007 was $100,000, twenty times that of black families and a fourfold increase in disparity over this relatively short period.

But perhaps the most startling recent development has been the finding of several recent reports showing that the black middle class as a group is not only losing ground compared

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Experience The Metropolitan Museum of Art with a World-renowned Art Historian

and Tour One of the Greatest Art Museums in the World in 24 Descriptive Lectures on DVD from The Teaching Company.

Where else can you find masterpieces extending from the dawn of civilization to today; or encyclopedic holdings from all the major cultures on earth; or genres ranging from paintings to period rooms, sculpture to suits of armor, metalwork to musical instruments—all situated in a palatial building in Central Park, Manhattan, one of the world's most magnificent parks? No other museum covers the history of humanity and its achievements as thoroughly as The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Many Museums Under One Roof

In 24 half-hour lectures, illustrated with more than 400 works of art, Professor Richard Brettell introduces you to virtually every department at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Each is a museum unto its own, representing one of the world's finest collections in its field. On the first floor alone, there are: Greek and Roman Art; Egyptian Art; Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas; Arms and Armor; European Sculpture and Decorative Arts; Modern Art; and the Robert Lehman Collection.

Some of these collections continue onto the second floor, where you will also find spectacular collections of: European paintings, Asian art, Ancient and Near Eastern art, Islamic art, drawings and prints, photographs, and musical instruments. Not to mention, on the ground floor: the Costume Institute and the Antonio Ratti Textile Center.

An Exhilarating Experience

You would have to move through the museum at superhuman speed to take in all of the works investigated in detail in the 12-hour running time of this course. Yet the experience with Dr. Brettell is one of a relaxed stroll with a very knowledgeable, very personable, and ceaselessly curious companion. The course is truly a user-friendly guide to a mammoth institution, which has amassed astonishing treasures.

About Your Professor

Professor Richard Brettell is the Margaret McDermott Distinguished Professor of Art and Aesthetics at The University of Texas at Dallas. He received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from Yale University. Professor Brettell's work includes exhibitions for museums in cities ranging from San Francisco to Copenhagen. He has delivered scholarly lectures at various museums and has written more than 25 books, including *19th and 20th Century European Drawings in the Robert Lehman Collection*.

About Our Sale Price Policy

Why is the sale price for this course so much lower than its standard price? Every course we make goes on sale at least once a year. Producing large quantities of only the sale courses keeps costs down and allows us to pass the savings on to you. This also enables us to fill your order immediately: 99% of all orders placed by 2 pm eastern time ship that same day. Order before August 7, 2010, to receive these savings.

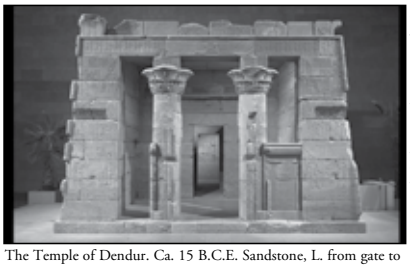


Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/ Art Resource, NY.

The Temple of Dendur. Ca. 15 B.C.E. Sandstone, L. from gate to rear of temple 82 ft. (24 m 60 cm). Given to the United States by Egypt in 1965, awarded to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1967, and installed in The Sackler Wing in 1978 (68.154).

About The Teaching Company

We review hundreds of top-rated professors from America's best colleges and universities each year. From this extraordinary group we choose only those rated highest by panels of our customers. Fewer than 10% of these world-class scholar-teachers are selected to make The Great Courses®.

We've been doing this since 1990, producing more than 3,000 hours of material in modern and ancient history, philosophy, literature, fine arts, the sciences, and mathematics for intelligent, engaged, adult lifelong learners. If a course is ever less than completely satisfying, you may exchange it for another, or we will refund your money promptly.

Lecture Titles

1. The Making of the Museum
2. The Art of Ancient Greece and Rome
3. Ancient Egyptian Art
4. Asian Art
5. The Ancient Near East and Islamic Art
6. European Painting I—The Renaissance
7. European Painting II—16th–17th Centuries
8. European Painting III—18th Century
9. European Painting IV—19th Century
10. Drawings and Prints
11. Photographs
12. European Decorative Arts
13. European Sculpture
14. The Arts of Africa and Oceania
15. The Ancient New World
16. Musical Instruments and Arms and Armor
17. Costumes and Textiles
18. American Art—1650–1865
19. American Art—1865–1900
20. 20th-Century Art—Before World War II
21. 20th-Century Art—After World War II
22. The Robert Lehman Collection—1400–1800
23. The Robert Lehman Collection—1800–1960
24. The People of the Museum

THE TEACHING COMPANY®
The Joy of Lifelong Learning Every Day™
GREAT PROFESSORS, GREAT COURSES, GREAT VALUE GUARANTEED.™

SAVE UP TO $185!
OFFER GOOD UNTIL AUGUST 7, 2010

1-800-TEACH-12 (1-800-832-2412)
Fax: 703-378-3819

Special offer is available online at
www.TEACH12.com/3ntn

The Great Courses®
THE TEACHING COMPANY®
4151 Lafayette Center Drive, Suite 100
Chantilly, VA 20151-1232

Priority Code 39409

Please send me **Museum Masterpieces: The Metropolitan Museum of Art**, which consists of twenty-four 30-minute lectures plus Course Guidebooks.

☐ **DVD $69.95** (std. price $254.95) **SAVE $185!**
plus $10 shipping, processing, and Lifetime Satisfaction Guarantee

☐ **Check or Money Order Enclosed**

* Non-U.S. Orders: Additional shipping charges apply.
For more details, call us or visit the FAQ page on our website.

** Virginia residents please add 5% sales tax.

Charge my credit card:

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

ACCOUNT NUMBER EXP. DATE

SIGNATURE

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

PHONE *(If we have questions regarding your order—required for international orders)*

☐ **FREE CATALOG.** Please send me a free copy of your current catalog (no purchase necessary).

Special offer is available online at www.TEACH12.com/3ntn
Offer Good Through: August 7, 2010

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with other groups but is failing to reproduce itself. A 2007 Pew Foundation/Brookings Institution study found that a majority of black middle-class children earned less than their parents and, even more alarming, that almost half of downwardly mobile offspring had fallen to the bottom of the income distribution.

What happened? How is this possible in a nation that boasts an African-American president and justly celebrates its civil rights movement as one of the great social revolutions of the twentieth century? What became of the dream of black economic empowerment and economic parity with whites? Why are black Americans so uniquely vulnerable to every recessionary wind that blows in the American economy?

Answering this question takes us straight to the heart of a profound paradox in the changing situation of African-Americans over the course of the past half-century. The civil rights movement, we now know, succeeded wonderfully in the public sphere of American life. From being virtual outcasts in nearly every area of public life as late as the 1950s, black Americans are now an integral part of the political, cultural and civic fabric. They are a critical component of one of the nation's major political parties; they are fully integrated into the military, making up more than 10 percent of the Army's officer corps; they exercise disproportionate influence in popular culture—in music, sports, theater, dance, film and TV—and they have been incorporated into elite public and corporate positions to a degree unparalleled in any other white-majority nation in the world, including those, like Brazil, with far greater absolute and relative numbers of blacks. Barack Obama's election is both the culmination of, and eloquent testimony to, this achievement in the public sphere.

However, accompanying this historic public achievement has been a stunning failure: the persisting exclusion of blacks from the private sphere of American life. Outside elite circles, blacks are as segregated today from the private domain of white lives—their neighborhoods, schools, churches, clubs and other associations, friendship networks, marriage markets and families—as they were fifty years ago. The failure of school desegregation tells one part of this tragic story. A recent report by the Civil Rights Project of the University of California shows that black and Latino schoolchildren are more segregated from whites than at any time since the 1960s: some 40 percent of black and Latino children attend schools that are almost entirely composed of blacks or Latinos. Religious institutions are as segregated today as in the '60s, when Martin Luther King Jr. famously observed that 11 o'clock Sunday morning is America's most segregated hour.

Both these forms of separation reflect a crucial source of racial apartness: residential segregation. The nation is as segregated today as it ever was, with hypersegregated and growing metropolitan areas—where blacks are concentrated in vast inner cities. Nowhere is the paradox of public integration and private exclusion better reflected than in the fact that America's most segregated places are its most liberal metropolitan areas, where blacks play major roles in public life—New York City (with its black state governor), Chicago, Washington, Detroit, Los Angeles and Boston (which also has a black state governor).

It is a cherished dogma of liberal social science that the causal relation runs the other way: segregation—and its attendant separations from white schools, relationships and institutions—results from economic inequality and racism. But such arguments are immediately undermined by one simple fact: middle-class black Americans are as segregated as their poor and underclass inner-city counterparts. The wealthy live in gilded ghettos; those with average middle-class incomes live in segregated communities that overlap with lower-class black neighborhoods, sharing services and social problems.

What does private-sphere separation have to do with inequality and persisting socioeconomic problems? Seventeen years ago sociologists Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton argued forcefully that liberal social scientists had committed a major error in neglecting segregation as a primary cause of the ongoing inequality of black Americans. After some initial skepticism on my part, I have come to believe that they were right and that their argument carries even more force today. In modern America, like all other major industrial societies, economic success stems as much from network location and access to cultural capital as from formal schooling. Getting a job, as sociologist Mark Granovetter showed in his pathbreaking work, is as much a function of who you know as what you know, and this holds as much for working-class as for high-tech and managerial positions. Of equal importance, however, is the finding of the late French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu: the transmission of cultural capital—the often tacit knowledge gained from family and friends that is reproduced in the extracurricular socialization of elite schools—is a critical factor in explaining economic inequality and other forms of social distinction. It is precisely such crucial networks and cultural capital that segregation excludes black Americans from. This, along with persisting, though declining, racism, explains, too, why black middle-class young people still lag far behind their white counterparts in school achievement and in career rewards from educational attainment. It explains also the looming tragedy of massive downward mobility and the failure of the black middle class to reproduce itself.

Policy has a crucial role to play in remedying this persisting source of black inequality: housing policies vigorously focused on desegregation; educational policies that aim at reversing the escalating resegregation of public schools; and renewed emphasis on antidiscrimination laws, especially in housing and employment. This, however, is the easy part. Of equal importance is the need for black Americans to do some serious soul-searching and re-examination of the prevailing cultural politics of identity, which sometimes explicitly, often implicitly, disdains the critical role of networks—both weak and strong, intimate and formal, sexual and marital—as well as full socialization in those areas of America's hybrid cultural processes vital for success.

No one more powerfully exemplifies the value of such an alternate path as the black American who sits in the White House.

Orlando Patterson, John Cowles Professor of Sociology at Harvard, has worked on race, culture and poverty in the United States and the Caribbean as well as the history of freedom and slavery. He currently directs a collaborative study of African-American youth. His book Freedom in the Making of Western Culture *won the National Book Award for nonfiction in 1991.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jeff Madrick

When we talk about income inequality in America, we are really talking about two distinct problems. The first is runaway incomes at the top of the earnings scale. The second is widespread income stagnation. Economists, policy-makers and the media typically treat the problems as one. In fact, the two problems require two different solutions.

The financialization of the economy is a major cause of the soaring incomes at the top. Financial companies account for about twice the proportion of GDP as they did thirty years ago, and up to 40 percent of corporate profits. And they pay their people ridiculously well—often two-thirds of their profits. What other industry does that? In 2006, before the markets began to totter, at least fifty people at Goldman Sachs made $20 million or more. Somewhat less prosperous Merrill Lynch paid $500 million to 100 people that year, an average of $5 million each. But the true rub was when Wall Street paid $145 billion in 2009, a near record, when the rest of America was mired in the worst recession since the 1930s and one out of six Americans couldn't find a full-time job.

Financialization also made the CEOs of industrial and services companies, and their cadre of executive subordinates, far richer than ever before. The ratio of CEO pay to that of the average worker soared. With giant stock options, a historically new phenomenon, CEOs' loyalty was now to the financial community, not to the machine tools, retailing or light bulbs that are their business—or to their employees. The surge of incomes to the top was supplemented by a natural tendency in a mass-market economy for "celebrities"—athletes, movie stars, bestselling writers—to earn outsize incomes. It is also likely that high incomes at financial firms forced companies to pay more competitive salaries to lawyers, accountants and other business-related professionals as well. Thus, the top 1 percent of families made 23.5 percent of all income in 2007, including capital gains, compared with less than 10 percent in the early 1970s. It hadn't risen nearly to that level since 1928.

Others in the top 20 percent also made more than the rest of America. But without that surge, the incomes of the top 20 percent of Americans would not have risen so much faster than the rest. In sum, the top fifth of families increased their share of total income from 41.1 percent in 1973 to 47.3 percent in 2007. The bottom 80 percent lost share.

To put a finer point on income stagnation, we should look at how wages have fared for the typical worker. At the New School, Nikolaos Papanikolaou and I found that the median wage for a high school–educated man working full-time today is, adjusted for inflation, roughly the same as it was in 1969. We found that even for those with college degrees, incomes stagnated for periods of twenty and thirty years at a time and are today only modestly higher than in 1969.

Incomes for full-time female workers rose, but not robustly, and they remained below male levels. Even when adding employer-provided healthcare and pension benefits, the hourly wage in America has largely stagnated for thirty-five to forty years. All the while, the costs of key middle-class services such as adequate healthcare and education—the products that define the contemporary middle class—have risen far more rapidly than the economy. Against these key costs, incomes fell.

The problem, then, is not inequality per se but a far bigger one—the lack of adequate jobs for the broad category of earners at the middle and lower-middle levels. The debate over income inequality is too often a diversion from this primary concern. The most misleading such diversion was made by mainstream economists, who repeatedly asserted that the jobs were there but that Americans weren't adequately educated. New technologies raised the need for increasingly well-educated Americans.

This was moderately true in the 1980s, but it has been a far less important factor since the early '90s. A good education is surely not the reason fifty people recently made $20 million or more at Goldman. Harvard economist Lawrence Katz has found that his school's graduates earn far more if they go into finance, even when they have the same intellectual and educational background and qualifications as those who do not.

What's more, the pay for college grads has stopped rising faster than pay for high school grads. If education was in such demand, why did that happen? And the pay for those in the fiftieth percentile, who are on average better educated than those nearer the bottom, is not growing faster than those at the bottom. The 50/10 gap—the income at the fiftieth percentile compared with the income at the tenth—has actually fallen since the mid-1980s. If education was the issue, that gap should have widened substantially.

Economists like Katz claim that jobs in the middle are the ones being offshored, which is why wages for the median worker are not rising faster than at the bottom. But there are other, more convincing explanations, among them that the minimum wage was, after many years of inaction, at last raised a couple of times in the 1990s, enabling low-end workers to make more. And the collapse of unions kept the middle from rising as well.

We need two sets of solutions. No economic theory, right or left, endorses exorbitant pay that exceeds by far the contribution made to the economy. NYU economist Thomas Philippon has persuasively shown that remuneration on Wall Street has been far higher than any economic contribution from these financial professionals could warrant. Their pay was not a function of skill or unusual talent. To the extent that Wall Street makes undue profit through oligopoly pricing power, market manipulation and the abuse of inside information, it should be taxed away.

Many are suggesting a transactions tax or a tax on financial assets. I'd propose a straightforward excess profits tax. The money could be used to invest in transportation, healthcare and infrastructure or to keep policy-makers' hands off Social Security. Such a tax would also dampen the persistent tendency of Wall Street to invest money where it is not needed but where financiers can generate the most fees. Trillions of dollars were misallocated in the housing market in the 2000s, an amount

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nearly comparable to the high-technology fantasies of the late '90s. Wall Street investors made fortunes, while the speculative bubbles only damaged the overall economy.

None of this is to say that a good education does not matter. College grads still do far better than high school grads; it's just that the gap is no longer widening. But a good education is now very much related to a youngster's relative privilege—the education and income levels of his or her parents. The better-educated are, in part, merely lucky to have that access and get better jobs. This is a good justification for raising income taxes on wealthier people.

Regarding executive compensation, shareholders should have more say. Stock options have been abused, and should be adjusted for any general increase in stock prices, so that CEOs don't merely benefit from a bull market. They should also be more tied to a company's actual earnings.

But stagnation of wages should be the nation's priority. It will require a multifold attack. First, there should be immediate fiscal stimulus, regardless of the federal deficit, preferably in the form of aid to the states and unemployment insurance. Even mainstream projections show there would be only a trivial increase in the deficit but enormous benefits in terms of mitigating the pain of the recession. There is a growing body of literature that indicates that recessions have long-term consequences—they reduce long-term rates of income growth [see Katherine Newman and David Pedulla on page 17]. So more deficits now may well reduce deficits in the future.

Second, the nation needs a serious industrial policy, directed at infrastructure and energy technologies. These produce double benefits: they create jobs at a time when Americans are in dire need of them, and they rebuild the foundation of the economy for future growth.

Third, trade policy has to include a lowering of the dollar to make US manufacturers more competitive and a continuing effort to persuade developing nations to improve their wages to build their domestic markets and thus level the playing field with the United States.

Fourth, education does still matter; it is just not the entire matter. There must be a renewed commitment to financial aid, at all levels, to equalize educational opportunities.

Finally, the government has to consider its role as employer of last resort. Ten percent unemployment rates, record levels of long-term unemployment and huge numbers of discouraged workers require such a "radical" solution. More than one out of six Americans can't find full-time work. These are wasted resources, and the longer they are neglected, the deeper the hole in which America will find itself.

It is not an accident that Wall Street has done well while much of the rest of America has not. The high dollar—a Clinton administration policy—punished manufacturing workers by placing exports at a price disadvantage. And it allowed Wall Street to channel huge dollar reserves, built up by China and other nations, to finance mortgage, auto loan and credit card securities and corporate takeovers. The Wall Streeters in the Clinton administration pushed for the policy. While the high dollar kept wages down, the flow of cheap debt encouraged Americans to borrow to keep their standard of living level—and perhaps mollify their political resentment. Meanwhile, the takeover movement stimulated rounds of worker firings to pay for the massive debt service taken on by these companies.

Will the government do what it must? Probably not. The nation is now squeezed by the enormous federal debt that was incurred to bail out Wall Street; this is the final blow dealt by Wall Street in this crisis. Markets turned up sharply from the desperate lows and bonuses soared again, but most of America kept on suffering.

Jeff Madrick is editor of Challenge *magazine and senior fellow at the Roosevelt Institute and the Schwartz Center for Economic Policy Analysis at the New School. His latest book is* The Case for Big Government.

Matt Yglesias

For all the disastrousness of the current recession in the developed world, examined more broadly the early twenty-first century has been one of the greatest times to be alive in the history of mankind. The cause is the enormous improvement in living standards of the people in China, India, Brazil and other large developing nations. On the moral balance sheet, this betterment of some of the globe's poorest people more than outweighs the continued stagnation of middle-class wages in the United States.

But the fact remains that here, in what's still the wealthiest large nation on earth, things have not been improving in a nearly commensurate manner. And yet it's not as if global economic growth has passed the country by. Instead, a wildly disproportionate share of the material gains of recent technological progress and economic globalization has been captured by a tiny, already rich slice of the population. The causes of this are complicated and controversial, and the solutions can be complicated if we want; but they can also be simple—the government can and should deploy its tax authority to capture a larger share of this wealth and spend it on useful services for the broad public.

Higher taxes to finance more and better public services is not the only conceivable method of curbing inequality, but it is the best one because it directly tackles the most objectionable aspect of high inequality in the economy—its tendency to perpetuate itself in the form of unequal access to basic social goods and unequal access to opportunities in the next generation.

The goal should be a country where every neighborhood features safe, well-paved streets, excellent schools, functioning mass transit and a healthy environment. Families should have equal access to medical treatment if they fall ill, to preschool and to decent nutrition for their children, and to a secure retirement after a few decades in the workforce. Those with skills that are more highly valued in the marketplace would still have fancier cars, larger televisions, more upscale

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

clothing. But the main conditions for human flourishing would be available across the board, and no family would need to worry that broadening America's circle of social and economic opportunity by allowing foreigners to move here or sell goods across national borders imperils their fundamental interests.

To get from here to there is going to be a difficult task in a country where the public is averse to any increase in taxation on the nonrich and where elites are equally hostile to the hiking of taxes on the wealthiest. Ultimately, doing some of both will be essential. That's because it's important to conceive of future expansion in public services in terms similar to those of our existing and highly successful insurance programs for retirees, Social Security and Medicare. These programs are redistributive in their impact, guaranteeing for all things that the rich could afford on their own, but they're not narrow antipoverty efforts, nor are they targeted giveaways. Instead, the idea is that everyone pays a share and everyone gets to participate in the benefits. This invests middle-class and even wealthy people in the notion of ensuring the quality of services and shifts the conversation away from the concept of "handouts."

Programs of this kind probably can't be funded exclusively through taxes on high earners. But the $250,000-and-over crowd would be a good place to start. Conventional wisdom sometimes holds that the public opposes even taxes on the richest, but the polling data don't support that conclusion. The problem is that politicians have shied away from raising taxes. There's also a strong case for increasing the number of tax brackets so the system can become more progressive at the higher end, and prosperous professionals earning "only" $500,000 a year would not be treated the same as multimillionaires. Another promising source of revenue is an excise tax on undesirable behavior. Greenhouse gas pollution should be taxed; the declining real value of federal alcohol taxes should be reversed; taxes on public health hazards like sugary drinks and junk food should be considered.

For the moment, however, fighting the recession must be the top priority, so tax increases should be deferred. The main thing now is to defend existing services against the apostles of austerity and, where possible, make the case that expansion of services can boost the economy and lay the groundwork for future prosperity.

One particularly promising set of opportunities lies in early childhood education and general well-being. Americans understand that a temporary economic downturn is not a good reason to permanently scar a generation of kids. As recession makes more children than ever dependent on food assistance, it's a good time to highlight the reality that subsidized school lunches suddenly become unavailable during summer vacation, although children need to eat whether or not school is open. More broadly, a family security agenda centered on assuring the availability of paid family leave and high-quality preschool has the potential to appeal to the streak of cultural conservatism that runs deep in working-class America. It would certainly connect the inequality agenda to the everyday concerns of American families.

What's more, a focus on family policy and early childhood has the virtue of working on two sides of the problem simultaneously. In other words, not only do expenditures in this realm directly mitigate the inequities of the market distribution of income; they serve to reduce inequality of opportunity and thus the tendency of unequal outcomes to reinscribe themselves on the next generation. On its own, that's inadequate to the full scope of the inequality challenge, but it's an excellent place to start.

Matt Yglesias is a fellow at the Center for American Progress.

Holding the Center

To build on the gains of Obama's presidency, progressive activists must focus on recruitment.

by JEAN HARDISTY AND DEEPAK BHARGAVA

Eighteen months into the Obama era, the progressive movement is experiencing malaise, based on disappointment about what has been accomplished so far and confusion about the path forward. The sense of disappointment is, in our view, exaggerated. It is important to remember that progressive campaigns and grassroots efforts have played a major role in achieving reforms that are more substantial than anything we have seen since the Great Society: provision of health insurance coverage to more than 30 million additional people and partial regulation of the health insurance industry; the largest (albeit temporary) expansion of antipoverty programs in forty years as part of the Recovery Act; student lending reforms making it easier for young people to go to college; and legislation to increase regulation of the financial sector. There is much to be proud of in the way progressive organizations have risen to the historical moment, educated and mobilized their constituencies, and helped to secure major victories that will have a real, positive impact on people's lives.

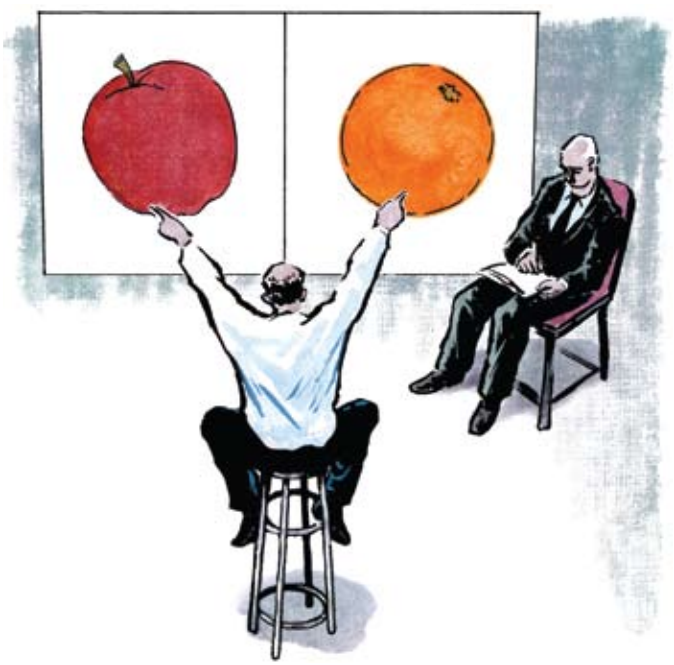
At the same time, there are legitimate grounds for disappointment with the administration's policies on many issues, including the war in Afghanistan, climate change, persistent unemployment, foreclosures, civil liberties and immigration, to name just a few. The gulf oil spill, the Arizona immigration law and real unemployment rates in the double digits are

Jean Hardisty is the founder and president emerita of Political Research Associates, a Boston-based research center. Deepak Bhargava is the executive director of the Center for Community Change.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

evidence of Washington's continuing failure to solve problems even when they become catastrophic.

As we head into a difficult and challenging period, with crucial elections looming and prospects for further progressive policy victories uncertain, the most important question for progressives is not how Obama is doing but how we as a movement are doing. Our most pressing challenge in this era is movement recruitment. This means focusing on building a base and drafting new followers of a progressive agenda as well as supporters for progressive politicians and organizations. If the movement has fallen down in this assignment, it is because we do not understand what Obama understands so well—that most people are not ideologically driven and, in fact, the opinions of most people are internally inconsistent. They should not be courted and recruited as if they are "latent progressives" waiting to be shown the truth. A sober look at the fluidity and ideological contradictions of public opinion in the country may point a way forward.



CHRISTOPHER SERRA

For thirty years, journalists and political analysts have described the polarized electorate as engaged in a "culture war." Though this frame provides a handy way to communicate the dialectic between the ideologies of the right and left, it is misleading and, to the extent that we buy into the dichotomy, could be damaging to progressive causes. The assumption that people are "with us or against us" suggests that people can be arrayed along an ideological spectrum from right to left, and that they will occupy their assigned spot consistently. That is, a person will be a "moderate rightist" or a "centrist" or an "extreme fundamentalist," or will occupy any number of other slots.

There are elaborate charts that lay out the distinctions among the many variations of each movement—the right and the progressive movement. But there is very little discussion of the actual content of the opinions of those in the center (not just voters but those who may, at some point, decide to vote). Many of these voters chose Obama in the 2008 election. They represent the potential for growth in the Democratic Party and perhaps the progressive movement. Pollsters do ask them how they rank their concerns and focus groups collect their opinions, often noting that those opinions do not reflect the reality of their material lives. But there is little research on their belief systems. As we have traveled the country for the past twenty-five years, we have observed that centrists are not ideologically consistent but are very often internally logically inconsistent. They do not adhere to any ideological belief system but are often all over the map ideologically.

Battles in Congress that fall rigidly along partisan lines reinforce the idea of two sides locked in a longstanding clash of worldviews. But despite the political drama of the "tea parties" staged by the right to oppose Obama, is the larger electorate similarly divided? And can we afford, at this weighty moment in history, to use a theme in our own work that was developed by the right to assist in its movement recruitment? Or should we reject the culture war frame outright?

We have found a third "side" in our experience, especially among nonactivists. Many people who are not ideologically driven (but who may hold strong opinions on various issues) make up the vast "center," in journalistic parlance. They are also called "swing voters" or "nonideological neighbors." They may identify with one party or the other, or see themselves as independents, but they couldn't state with certainty the major parties' stance on every position. This fluid "center" is the determining vote in many elections and issue campaigns. Obama ran as a thoughtful, modest, knowledgeable and principled candidate who is not ideologically driven. It is precisely because he was able to project a nonideological persona that he won. This point is important for progressives to understand. Obama attracted an odd collection of voters in his campaign, and not all of them agreed with him on everything. In part, that's because so many voters don't agree with themselves on everything.

Without a deeper understanding of the misperceptions from the culture war, progressives will fail to learn two important lessons from the right's past success with centrists: (1) there is no movement building without prioritizing recruitment; and (2) it is important to go everywhere, even into hostile territory, to recruit those who agree with you on one or more things. It is notable that the states that have sent the most conservative Blue Dog Democrats to Congress, where they have blocked progressive initiatives in the Senate and House—Arkansas, Nebraska, Indiana, Louisiana, Montana and others—are places where progressives have not been able to build a strong base. To engage in effective recruitment, progressives need to understand the political center. Understanding the center is the key to understanding how Obama captured the election and how he has governed.

For many people, especially those not on the left or right of the political spectrum, internal ideological consistency is not a compelling duty. Many people hold strong opinions that are contradictory, and they are not bothered by that. Bitter grumbling about the US Postal Service is often accompanied by equally bitter grumbling about rising taxes, which are needed

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to support postal improvements. Many who are antichoice on the issue of abortion, saying that it is "killing a human being," are also pro–death penalty. Those who complain loudest about tainted peanut butter may oppose government regulation of industry. These constituents demonstrate that social traditions can trump financial self-interest, and that financial self-interest can sometimes trump social traditions. Loyalty to community practices, to family or friendship networks, to religious training or to economic self-interest plays a large role in a person's worldview, but nevertheless most people believe what they want to believe. The ideological commitments of the average voter cannot easily be categorized, as they can be in the case of ideologically motivated activists.

Obama's lack of a clear, consistent ideology is appealing to many centrists. Having endured eight years of George W. Bush, whose ideology was seldom breached during his administration, the voters were open to embracing a nonideologue. The "hope" and "change" slogans, maligned by Obama's opposition and some leftists, allowed many voters to assign positions to him according to their own internally inconsistent preferences. And now we see Obama presiding over an administration that is also internally inconsistent. He brought on Larry Summers and Tim Geithner, two central figures in the financial excesses of the past fifteen years, to fix the problems those excesses have caused. He expresses strong support for unions and also supports charter schools, which are notorious for barring unionization of teachers. He wants to study the violations of the Constitution under George W. Bush carefully but has shown a willingness to use some of Bush's arguments to protect "state secrets." These are not the positions of an ideologue.

In order to woo centrist voters, rightists and progressives have debated whether to stay close to their core principles or to reach out with compromise policies. If the progressive movement wants to succeed in the Obama era, we must have a deep analytical understanding of the country, be politically mature in realizing that a movement needs above all to recruit new members and learn to live with those whose beliefs contain inconsistencies while opposing those beliefs that violate our core principles. Racism, homophobia, xenophobia and certain other bigotry cannot be condoned in any way. But how we oppose them is important. When Rick Warren, an explicitly antigay preacher, was chosen to give the invocation at Obama's inauguration, the LGBTQ community modeled an effective oppositional campaign to register their protest and educate Obama. Rather than demonize and attack Obama, they instead focused on demonstrating how insulting and hurtful the decision was. This is an approach that community organizers know well. Quite often, the challenge they face is to mobilize the community around an issue that will draw the maximum number of people. Without compromising their principles, organizers will often work with people whose views on other issues are incomprehensible to them. If the positions of supporters are abhorrent, however, recruitment could become a betrayal of core principles.

Voters who lack ideological consistency are estimated to account for between 18 and 25 percent of the electorate—more than the hard-core members of the religious right. The importance of the Tea Party has been vastly overstated relative to the importance of this swing bloc. Like Obama, the right seems to understand the strategic value of appealing to swing voters. For example, many born-again evangelical Christians, most of whom are not part of the religious right, are extremely generous and compassionate people. By teaching that poverty is a "disease of the soul," the right has played to their inconsistency. While criticizing government programs for serving both the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor (the latter being poor because they are losers, addicts or loose women), those on the right advocate addressing poverty on a case-by-case basis. It is more difficult for them to paint children with the "undeserving" brush, but the Republican blockage of S-CHIP legislation in 2008, and the lack of outrage about that from the center, demonstrates the power of ideological inconsistency. Most evangelicals agree that child poverty is certainly wrong and should be addressed, but often that position does not lead to support for federal programs. To progressives this is a blatant inconsistency, but to many evangelicals, who have been courted, recruited and "educated" by the right, it is an acceptable, even logical, position. While they do charitable work, often serving as the first to lend help in a natural disaster and provide desperately needed services on a daily basis, they see this work as a "private" rather than government mission. Their religiously motivated antipoverty work often places them close to people's experiences and gives them an understanding of the life challenges of the average person. But they do not trust government (also often based on their own experience).

Centrists who voted for Obama represent the potential for growth in the Democratic Party, and they are not ideologically consistent.

It seems unlikely that Obama will address this inconsistency on the issue of poverty head-on, instead continuing his practice of quietly improving government benefits for low-income people while not invoking the words "poverty" or "welfare." But progressives can play a role in appealing to centrists on the issue of poverty—while, at the same time, beginning to recast the debate—by engaging in the age-old tradition of making meaning and teaching: through traveling lecturers (drawing on the history of populism); teach-ins (the antiwar movement); citizenship schools (from the civil rights tradition); consciousness raising (feminism) and popular education. These practices are largely defunded and weak on the left. We seem more regularly to ask people to take action on very specific policy issues without helping them understand the larger context or make meaning of their experiences through dialogue. The progressive movement needs to create venues for this sort of self-education.

In its early stages, this education could appeal to the generosity and caring of many hardline opponents of government

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

programs. We could approach the issue with an understanding of the inconsistencies and not require an entire progressive ideological package—arguing, for instance, that churches and private charities alone cannot effectively address poverty. Such a campaign would not insist that its adherents understand that private relief programs often provide services to those with whom they identify rather than taking a universal approach. Or that private relief is often racially discriminatory, demeaning and inadequate. Rather, that a country that allows children and adults to go hungry is not a caring country.

The progressive movement is often presented as fractured between those "defending Obama's back" and those "rejecting him as inadequate to the task he set himself (and he's no progressive to boot)." None of what we have said about the importance of recruitment suggests that we should not criticize Obama. As progressives, we are obliged, for example, to confront the failure of the administration to respond aggressively to the massive unemployment that is wrecking people's lives, especially in communities of color. But this division between Obama supporters and detractors is weakening the progressive movement, as each side is increasingly intolerant of the other. Those who engage in recruitment appreciate the need to work with people who are not consistently progressive in order to open minds to new messages; those who are fed up with Obama are pushing him to be more committed to progressive principles and more willing to take risks for them. But a mature movement can play both roles, because its members understand there is a need for both.

It is unrealistic to believe that what stands between us and progressive success is simply insufficient nerve or spine on the part of the president. Our argument is for realism and a deep understanding of the context in which campaigns are conducted in the United States. We are calling for the progressive movement to put movement building and recruitment at the center of its ambitions, without giving up our principles or engaging in internecine conflict over who is most ideologically pure.

The progressive movement entered the Obama era in a somewhat depleted state. While we have large, well-funded think tanks and media organizations, the grassroots groups so vital to a healthy movement are struggling and closing in the midst of the financial crisis affecting their donors and many foundations. Corporate power and money still present formidable obstacles to the changes we seek. Equally important, the movement lacks an overarching vision. But while the United States in many ways remains a conservative country, changing demographics and a maturing and savvy progressive movement could even the political playing field as never before. With a clear and realistic reading of the country and a humility not often associated with the left, progressives could carry the day for decades to come. ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

echoes reports by the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "by restricting the food, medical supplies, educational equipment, and building materials allowed into Gaza, the Israeli authorities are collectively punishing the entire population of Gaza, the majority of whom are children."

The Nation has never been a supporter of Hamas; as Alterman must surely know, three years ago in a lead editorial we said, "We cannot accept Hamas's ideology, and we reject the idea that 'Islam is the solution' to political problems (the common formulation of Hamas and other Muslim Brotherhood–affiliated movements). But the United States and Israel must finally acknowledge that Hamas is a popular movement with deep roots in Palestinian society, and for that reason should be engaged rather than ignored."

In 2006 Hamas won elections that were universally acknowledged to be free and fair. For the United States and Israel to attempt to sabotage those elections and isolate Hamas—which they have done from the moment the results were announced—because they didn't like the outcome is not only the height of hypocrisy but deeply damaging to the prospects for a resolution of the conflict. As we pointed out three years ago, "arbitrary exclusion of a major, democratically elected Palestinian constituency in favor of malleable figures with little popular backing is doomed to fail."

Furthermore, although Hamas is in many ways deeply reactionary and has carried out appalling acts of terrorism, it is a complex and evolving party and movement, with moderate and hardline factions. Its leaders have stated repeatedly that they will accept a two-state solution; most recently, top leader Khaled Meshal did so in an interview with Charlie Rose. Engaging Hamas, and testing its claim to accept a two-state solution, which the Palestinian people overwhelmingly support, is the best way to reinforce the movement's moderate tendencies.

The tragedy aboard the *Mavi Marmara* was a wake-up call—a call not only for America and Israel to end the inhumane Gaza blockade but to end the counterproductive isolation of the Palestinians' democratically elected leaders. Only then will we be able to work toward a just and lasting resolution of the conflict.

THE EDITORS

Money & Polling: The Root of All Evil

LOS ANGELES

As a longtime *Nation* fan I prefer writing love letters about what a critical role you play, but I have strong concerns about your "Ten Things You Can Do to Win Political Campaigns" [June 21]. It is a mistake to lead your list with "Raise money" and follow with "Poll smartly." Money often goes into awful and inept TV ads and lousy mailers, which make *no* difference in electing good candidates. More and more data show that far more important than another bad TV ad (which viewers mute, TiVo or forget) is active engagement. The use of social media or a phone call or e-mail to a neighbor, friend or relative has far more impact than ads.

We absolutely *must* work outside the money machine framework. We will never achieve committed candidates and meaningful progressive change if we are chained to the yoke of money and polls. I'm pleased you called attention to fairelectionsnow.org. We at BNF are pleased to work for fair elections and to help fix the system.

ROBERT GREENWALD
Brave New Foundation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books & the Arts.

COURTESY THE ARTIST, MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY (PARIS, NEW YORK), FRITH STREET GALLERY (LONDON)

A still from *Craneway Event* (2009), by Tacita Dean. Photograph © Michael Vahrenwald.

The Changing Light at Craneway

by BARRY SCHWABSKY

The current exhibition at the Guggenheim, "Haunted: Contemporary Photography/Video/Performance" (through September 6), is a grab bag of works from the museum's collection that left me wondering about the point of its title. Few of the pieces seem obviously haunted or haunting. On the contrary, anything manifesting too vividly the possibility of an unseen reality has been avoided, despite the fact that photography has been used to visualize the spirit world nearly since the invention of the camera, as we were reminded in 2005 by the Metropolitan Museum of Art's cleverly titled exhibition "The Perfect Medium: Photography and the Occult." William Mumler made the first spirit photographs in the 1860s; the Cottingley Fairies that fooled Arthur Conan Doyle were photographed in 1917. And people are still arguing about the "thoughtographs" Ted Serios purportedly produced by purely psychic means in the 1960s.

You don't need to be a spiritualist to be interested in photography's affinity for ghosts, but it helps to be willing to imagine why someone might take the idea of spirits seriously. The curators of "Haunted," Jennifer Blessing and Nat Trotman, are unwilling to do that. Strangely, the art they prefer is mostly dry and theory-driven and doesn't want to think too hard about the unknowable. Chronologically, the show begins with works from 1963 by Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg. Could JFK be the specter that haunts this show? Maybe, but section titles like "Appropriation and the Archive" and "Documentation and Reiteration" promise only another rehearsal of the post-Minimalist, post-Conceptual, academically approved mainstream of art since the '60s. Not too many ghosts or fairies linger about the water towers that Bernd and Hilla Becher have photographed with such perfect clarity and detachment. The shadows in which weird folk might lurk have been banished. Nor does Sarah Charlesworth's series "Herald Tribune November 1977"—twenty-six photographs of the newspaper's front pages for the month, but with the text expunged, leaving only the banner and pictures—seem terribly otherworldly. A work of ideology critique, raising questions about how the news media use images to construct a mythology of the present, it doesn't have much truck with the uncanny.

Meanwhile, a host of contemporary photographic and other art overtly concerned with the supernatural has been left out. I had expected to see all of Rachel Harrison's "Perth Amboy Series" (2001), photographs of the window of a house in New Jersey where the image of the Virgin Mary was supposed to have appeared: hands reach out fervently to touch the miraculous pane of glass. And where are Francesca Woodman's photographs of herself blurring into or out of her surroundings? I don't think I've ever read a description of those pictures in which the writer has been able to avoid using the word "ghostly." "Haunted" may not be entirely bereft of anything numinous—the shadowy, downward-drifting wreckage in Paul Chan's flash animation projection *6th ~~Light~~* (2007) is eerie enough to qualify—but the atmosphere is not conducive to its manifestation.

Blessing and Trotman see things differently. Of Charlesworth's series, for instance, they write that today's viewer "experiences a certain pathos in seeing the smiling faces of figures that are now long gone, symbolizing the collective loss of memory that occurs over time." It's true that all photographs, insofar as they capture a slice of a determinate moment in time, present something that is always becoming increasingly lost to us even as we look at it, and that every portrait is the portrait of someone who will subsequently die. "In

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

front of the photograph of my mother as a child," Roland Barthes famously wrote, "I tell myself: she is going to die." One could say the same of anyone whose face happens to have been featured on the front page in 1977. But by this criterion, *all* photographs are haunted, and to abide by it is to deny oneself any basis for curatorial judgment.

While "Haunted" is a ho-hum show on a promising theme, it's still worth trudging up the Guggenheim's spiral ramp. Not only does it include some good, if rather familiar, work by mostly quite prominent artists—I greeted pieces by Joan Jonas, Annette Messager, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Gillian Wearing and others as old friends—but it saves the best for last. At the top you'll find Tacita Dean's six-screen color film installation of 2008, whose entirely self-explanatory title is *Merce Cunningham performs STILLNESS (in three movements) to John Cage's composition 4'33" with Trevor Carlson, New York City, 28 April 2007 (six performances; six films)*. Cage, who died in 1992, was Cunningham's life partner for nearly fifty years; *4'33"* was his most notorious composition, the one that gave a new meaning to the expression "more heard about than heard." Cunningham died last year at 90.

In *Boots* only the building seems real, and the man inside just a wraith who haunts it.

Born in Canterbury in 1965, but for some time now resident in Berlin, Dean is one of a number of British artists who, in the 1990s, fomented a revival of film as a medium for artists (among the others the most prominent are Isaac Julien and Steve McQueen). In the interwar period artists had dabbled in celluloid, particularly those in the orbit of Dada and Surrealism: Marcel Duchamp's *Anemic Cinema* appeared in 1926, Joseph Cornell's *Rose Hobart* in 1936. Film came to the fore again in the '60s with artists like Warhol and Michael Snow, but by the '70s most artists with an interest in the moving image had abandoned film in favor of video. By the time they began to reclaim film in the '90s, it had accrued a somewhat retro patina that undoubtedly contributed to people's fascination with it. Dean's work often has an elegiac tone, which is enhanced by her use of celluloid, a waning medium.

Her installation is on a very different scale from anything else in "Haunted." You might think you'd wandered into a whole other exhibition, for *STILLNESS*, as I'll call it, sweeps you up into its own heady atmosphere in a way that the rest of "Haunted" pointedly refuses to do. More than that, it could take you a while to realize you're looking at films. For a minute I thought these were slide projections, so still—"unimaginably still," as Dean has said—does the great dancer and choreographer hold himself. But no, this is film, and its stillness is the dance most appropriate to Cage's silent music. Like many classical works, *4'33"* is in three movements; when Trevor Carlson, executive director of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, gives the signal for the end of a movement—a word that in this context has a rather ironic ring to it—Cunningham changes position and you know you're watching a movie. And while it's hard to accept silence-as-music as more than a hypothesis, he embodies stillness-as-dancing with such fierce concentration that the idea becomes irrefutable.

At the Guggenheim it is impossible to enter the space where any of the six films are projected without walking between a projector and a screen—that is, without casting a shadow on the image. I'm not sure that this is something the artist intended. *STILLNESS* was previously exhibited at Dia:Beacon, in what must have been a quite different configuration for a very different kind of space, and reviews of that version mention nothing about viewers' shadows. But the intervention of the shadows in this installation struck me profoundly. They constitute a second level of projection in the work, and one that both Cunningham and Cage would have appreciated—an opening for chance into the seemingly fixed nature of film.

Cage himself, after all, had been greatly inspired by Rauschenberg's white paintings of 1951, works in which all one could see beyond the simple presence of the paintings was the changing light of the space in which they hung, "so that one could look at them," as Rauschenberg later said, "and almost see how many people were in the room by the shadows cast." More lyrically, Cage called them "airports for the lights, shadows, and particles." I've never been quite convinced by this view of the Rauschenberg paintings. Their sheer neutrality arguably makes them less responsive to light than a good many other paintings. But taking a similar view of Dean's *STILLNESS* made immediate sense to me. The installation accords an active role to the light of the projector as an element in itself. And besides, the shadow becomes a much more notable presence when we experience it as interfering with something than when it simply lands on a blank, passive surface; in this case, it is the image of Cunningham performing his stillness that one's shadow partly eclipses. And as far as the theme of "haunting" goes, here it is the living whose shadows haunt the image of the dancer now dead—he who in the seemingly simple act of holding still radiated life in a way that one can only envy.

Cunningham is only the most recent in a series of elderly men whom Dean has been drawn to as subjects. In 2002 she filmed the Italian sculptor Mario Merz, then 77. As with Cunningham in *STILLNESS*, the film shows Merz just sitting, though not exactly still and not exactly silent. He rests quietly in a chair under a tree, occasionally speaking softly in Italian, seemingly half to himself although at times directly addressing an off-screen interlocutor. Even if you know the language, it can be hard to make out what he's saying. "The weather that afternoon was fickle," Dean would later recall, "casting Mario into deep shade and bright illumination. He joked, chatted and pronounced, and picked his teeth, while observing the scene like a canny old lion with the sun catching his mane. Only at one point did he become more ruminative, when three funeral bells started to toll from the square. Asking if they were bells for the dead, someone replied they were festival bells but he wasn't fooled." Unforgettable is the simplicity with which Merz's willingness to do nothing but be present with the weather and other people and the unmoving camera is matched by the film's willingness to do nothing but be present with him and whatever he is present to.

STILLNESS and *Mario Merz* might be thought of as two parts of a triptych whose third panel is another portrait of an artistic elder. In 2007 Dean was commissioned to make a work for an exhibition of artists' responses to the writing of W.G. Sebald. Instead of approaching the writer's work directly, she made a film about a friend of Sebald's, likewise German-born, whom the novelist wrote about and in some way ventriloquized in *The Rings of Saturn*. But Dean is only as indirect as her subject turns out to be. In *Michael Hamburger* the distinguished eponymous poet and translator is seen and heard talking, not of his literary accomplishments or of those things in his family history that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

preoccupied Sebald, namely Hamburger's experience as a Jew who had to flee the Nazis in 1933, when he was 9, bearing, as Sebald wrote, "the fears and anxieties of the family as they travelled toward the unknown." Instead Hamburger speaks at length of the apples he likes to grow on his property in Suffolk. Actually, these had caught the Sebald's eye too: he "looked on these apples which shone through the half-light much as the golden apples likened in Proverbs to a word fitly spoken." Like *Mario Merz*, the film is as much about light (and half-light) and weather—there's even a rainbow—as about the person who experiences them.

Dean has made another, much more elaborate piece with an elderly man, this one a triptych in itself, although in this case it's less clear that it can be said to be about the man. Rather, it's about a building. *Boots* (2003) must have been shot just before *Mario Merz*, because Dean has said it was the first time a person had appeared in one of her films—her previous works had showed places without people. The work consists of three films, or three versions of the same film, projected simultaneously in adjoining rooms. In each of them a man walking on two canes wanders through an eerily empty Art Deco villa reminiscing about events that took place there long ago, but in each version he tells his vague, fragmented story in a different language—English, French or German. Are these his true memories, lies or fiction? It's impossible to tell; but this "Boots" is clearly a slippery character, louche in a very cosmopolitan way, who seems to quietly pride himself on a hyper-sophistication that's not a little bit creepy. And hearing him repeat his tale three times only heightens the sense of artifice. (It's interesting to learn that the three versions were not filmed separately; Dean has explained that "Boots" kept switching between languages as he spoke and that only when she started trying to edit her footage did the idea of making three separate films occur to her.) Given that the work is essentially a tour of the house, it's notable that Dean's camera (as usual in her work) never moves; it changes position from shot to shot but always maintains a sort of monumental stillness. In the end, only the building seems real, the man just a wraith who haunts it.

STILLNESS was made in an afternoon. Six takes were done and turned out to be the six versions of *4'33"* that make up the installation—like the decision to break up the *Boots* footage into three parts, evidence of the spontaneity underlying the somber, almost stolid sobriety of Dean's vision. But Dean had not seen enough of Cunningham. Luckily, she was able to work with him once more, on her first feature-length film, *Craneway Event* (2009), recently shown at the Frith Street Gallery in London (and at Marian Goodman Gallery in Paris through July 23). If the phrase "feature-length" conjures up something with a plot, or even just something like a conventional documentary—well, remember, this is an artist's film, so adjust your expectations accordingly. "I refuse to have my films shown in cinemas because they're just inappropriate and wrong," Dean has said. "They are works for galleries." In the case of *Craneway Event*, I longed for the more comfortable seating and higher-quality sound that might have been afforded by a theater. Precisely the things that make the film so different from anything you'd be likely to see in a movie theater—its slow pace, lack of linear development and so on—would be easier for viewers to accommodate themselves to if everything else was less spartan.

> Time witnesses the wreckage of human projects and the failure of human bodies.

Craneway Event is pure Dean in style: widescreen (like most of her longer pieces, such as *Boots*, though not short ones like *STILLNESS*), static camera, no voiceover or music, a soundtrack that gives equal rights to seemingly random background sounds and human speech, an exquisite sensitivity to the changing qualities of light. It shows Cunningham rehearsing his company for a performance to be given in Craneway Pavilion, a former industrial building on San Francisco Bay, built in 1930 as a Ford assembly plant, from which cars could be craned directly onto waiting freighters. Its windows are so massive, the place could almost be a giant greenhouse. The linear architectural skeleton functions as an abstract container for the light that permeates it and the people who pass through it. The weather must have been extraordinarily changeable over the three days in which Dean filmed (beginning on election day 2008), because the constant variations in light from bright to dark and back again could give the impression that the work covers a longer stretch of time.

And just as it seems to span more time than it really does, *Craneway Event* seems to encompass vast space. The double-width format Dean often uses lends itself to this effect, in any case, but I've never seen another work of hers exploit it so fully. So much is going on at any one time. The image has no stable center; any point within this long rectangle might be at the corner of your eye. Even as Cunningham might be working with one group of dancers, others are warming up or practicing moves alone or in pairs or trios. Things happen in flurries here and there—all this small, sudden, fluid, fluttering activity—while elsewhere there is near-stasis. Simultaneities occur that are random and yet filled with intentionality—a quintessence of the Cunningham/Cage aesthetic. I kept thinking of *Pie*, Dean's brief 2003 film of magpies flocking around some trees at dusk, and of the sense I had that there is a pattern to their unpredictable movements but one that could never be reconstructed. At stake, as the art historian and critic Briony Fer put it, is not the patterns of the birds' movements "so much as the patterns of our viewing habits"—how we make sense of coincidence.

Cunningham must have had a superbly developed sense of how to perceive separate movements both simultaneously and as a constellation. He is very much the witness within the film. He never dominates—or rather, he dominates in the most understated possible way. Clearly, the dancers already have a deep implicit understanding of what it is they are supposed to do. He has no need to remind them why. I couldn't help but think, by contrast, of the tension Calvin Tomkins witnessed while following the preparation of a new Cunningham piece in the '60s: there were scenes of dancers breaking down in tears at their inability to execute difficult new moves. There's nothing like that in *Craneway Event*. Sitting in his wheelchair instructing his company, Cunningham speaks in brief, economical phrases, never philosophizing, never waxing lyrical. His observations are technical and mostly mean no more to a layman like me than, say, a mechanic's advice to a colleague about why an engine is running badly would to someone who doesn't drive. Yet over the course of 108 minutes, something seems gradually to cohere. Not that the dance takes on an overt and final shape on which the viewer can get an overview, but this multiplicity of movements grows more and more concerted.

At heart, Cage's aesthetic constitutes a plea that we pay more attention with greater equanimity to things as they occur—

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to sound, for example—without our habitual urge to form or transform them in the image of our will or desire. What Germaine Greer once wrote of *Boots* seems to be an apt observation of all of Dean's work: "The artist is on one level demanding and directing an extraordinary degree of attention and on another absenting herself altogether." Cage would have approved. But Cunningham, as steeped in this aesthetic as he was, also saw its limitations. He told Tomkins he could not employ chance in performance because, for one thing, the dancers might crash into one another and injure themselves. We can never be as laissez-faire with living bodies as we can with things like sounds. Our care for one another precludes the suspension of will and desire.

For Dean the camera may be an instrument of detachment, but its impassivity in the face of life is poignant because time witnesses the wreckage of human projects (many of her films center on disused or abandoned buildings) and the failure of human bodies. "All the things I am attracted to are just about to disappear, more or less," Dean once told the writer Marina Warner. I admit it gives me the willies, a bit, when I think about how all these old men disappeared so soon after Dean filmed them—Cunningham, Merz, Hamburger and the old family friend nicknamed Boots. Their fragility must have been part of what fascinated her, yet in the films she never sets out to expose their weakness, their weariness, their pain. Her camera never pries below the surface of things: the surface is enough. In looking at Cunningham and the rest, she is not looking for signs of their mortality. Mortality is implicit in time itself—in the shivering of a branch when a bird alights on it, in the ripening of an apple, in the stillness or motion of a dancer's limbs, in the changing quality of light. ■

Mirror, Mask, Labyrinth

by SUSAN STEWART

During this year's long white winter, blank with snow and early dark, I kept two volumes from the South close at hand—just-published Penguin paperbacks of the poems of Jorge Luis Borges in facing-page translations. One, *The Sonnets*, is organized by form; the other, *Poems of the Night*, by theme. To say so, however, is to oversimplify, for Borges wrote many sonnets on nocturnal themes, and his night poems, like most nocturnes, poetic or musical, wander and return in line with our experience of night itself. The editors of these volumes, Stephen Kessler for the sonnets and Efraín Kristal for the poems of night, called upon some of the same translators (including Robert Fitzgerald, Alastair Reid and W.S. Merwin) but otherwise stayed out of each other's way as they culled poems from the entirety of Borges's career. Kessler includes Borges's first known sonnet in Spanish, "Pedro Luis in Martigny," a portrait of a friend enclosed in a letter to another friend in Geneva in 1920, when Borges was 21, and both editors include work from Borges's last publications in 1985 and 1986, the year of his death, which found him as well in Geneva.

In the introduction to his *Obra Poética 1923–1985*, brought out by Emecé Editores in Buenos Aires in 1989, Borges recalls a passage from a letter of his beloved literary ancestor Robert Louis Stevenson: "I do not set up to be a poet. Only an all-round literary man: a man who talks, not one who sings.... Excuse this apology; but I don't like to come before people who have a note of song, and let it be supposed I do not know the difference." This borrowed strategy of first apologizing, then dazzling, was an intrinsic aspect of Borges's public persona; we find it, too, in the doubled being of his well-known little essay "Borges and I." There he writes: "news of Borges reaches me by mail, or I see his name on a list of academics or in some biographical dictionary. My taste runs to hourglasses, maps, eighteenth-century typefaces, etymologies, the taste of coffee and the prose of Robert Louis Stevenson; Borges shares those preferences, but in a vain sort of way that turns them into the accoutrements of an actor.... I live, I allow myself to live, so that Borges can spin out his literature, and that literature is my justification."

The Sonnets
By Jorge Luis Borges.
Edited by Stephen Kessler.
Penguin. 311 pp. Paper $18.

Poems of the Night
By Jorge Luis Borges.
Edited by Efraín Kristal.
Penguin. 200 pp. Paper $17.

Obscure provincial of the New World, destined to live out his life as a near invalid in a tiny apartment with his mother once he loses his "reading and writing" sight in his mid-50s; prim celibate; lover, Platonic or otherwise, of dozens of women and husband of two in his late age; firebrand of the early twentieth-century avant-garde, who brought the news of Geneva, Madrid, Seville and Majorca to Buenos Aires; publisher, in the 1920s, of the "Ultraist" Symbolist journal *Prisma* and of *Proa*, the journal of democratic reform and liberal, syncretic, poetics; high school dropout; devotee of Federico García Lorca, denigrator of García Lorca; the most learned reader of the twentieth century; in a bizarre historical irony, the third person to hold the position of director of the National Library of Argentina "whom God granted both books and blindness"; professor of literature at the University of Buenos Aires and scholar of Anglo-Saxon; recipient of honorary degrees from Oxford, Columbia, Cambridge and elsewhere, of the Jerusalem Prize, the Alfonso Reyes Prize and the Cervantes Prize; longstanding supporter of the Radical Party; fearless opponent of the dictatorship of Juan Domingo Perón; willfully naïve apologist for the brutal late-1970s military regimes of Argentina and Chile. There is no end to the string of paradoxes that arise from the biographies of Borges and "Borges."

Such contradictions were indeed part of Borges's legacy—from his family, his nation, his literary tradition. A descendant of the first Europeans to arrive in the Americas, Borges was more interested in his nineteenth-century ancestors who had helped to found Argentina as a nation. In a poem from 1940, "The Cyclical Night," translated by Alastair Reid, he writes of the "Pythagorean" rotation of reincarnation that has landed him in Buenos Aires:

> This, here, is Buenos Aires. Time,
> which brings
> Either love or money to men, hands
> on to me
> Only this withered rose, this empty
> tracery
> Of streets with names recurring
> from the past
>
> In my blood: Laprida, Cabrera,
> Soler, Suárez...

Susan Stewart's most recent book of poems is Red Rover.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Names in which secret bugle calls
are sounding,
Invoking republics, cavalry, and
mornings,
Joyful victories, men dying in action.

Francisco Narciso de Laprida and Gerónimo Salguero de Cabrera were signatories at the Congress declaring Argentina's independence; Miguel Estanislao Soler fought with San Martín against Spain; and Manuel Isidoro Suárez, who is also the subject here of a sonnet, "Colonel Suárez," was Borges's great-grandfather on his mother's side, acolyte of Bolívar and hero of the penultimate battle of Latin American independence, the Battle of Junín, which was fought high in a snowy field in the Peruvian Andes in 1824. The writer's grandfather Col. Francisco Borges—husband of his paternal grandmother, the Englishwoman Fanny Haslam—is in turn the subject of five of Borges's poems. Family legend described Francisco, as he took part in the failed rebellion of General Mitre against the elected government in 1874, defying orders to retreat and riding out bravely alone into the field with his arms across his chest, although in truth he was killed by two bullets at the height of the conflict.

If Borges at times seemed to find the lives of these men of action more suited to poetry than his own experiences as a man of letters, this sentiment arose not only from the vivid folklore that celebrated the liberal *unitario* politics of both sides of his family but also from his conviction that the root of all literature is the epic. He liked to quote from *The Odyssey*. "The gods weave adversities for men," said Borges, "so that future generations will have something to sing about." In a late "poem of the night" with the title "Yesterdays," here translated by Kessler, Borges begins:

From a lineage of Protestant
ministers
and South American soldiers
who fought, with their incalculable
dust,
against the Spaniards and the
desert's lances,
I am and I am not.

Then he quickly turns to his "true lineage," that of poetic lines, and the memory of his father reading aloud Swinburne's pounding rhythms.

Borges was drawn to Arab literature, including the imaginary Arabic of Edward Fitzgerald's *Rubáiyát* and the tales of the *One Thousand and One Nights*, and to mystical traditions, from Sufism to the Kabbalah. Though these works arrived via Spanish culture, he was also shaped by local influences. At least since the duel between Domingo Sarmiento's anti-*caudillo* and anti-gaucho tract of 1845, *Facundo: Or, Civilization and Barbarism*, and José Hernández's 1872 dialect masterpiece, *The Gaucho Martín Fierro*, Argentine writing has been tangled in political struggles between the city and the provinces, between liberal reform and *caudillo* independence, between the *criollismo* emphasis on Spanish ancestry and the cosmopolitan fact of the country's immigrant history.

AP

Francisco Rodón (left), Jorge Luis Borges and María Kodama pose in front of a portrait of Borges, painted by Rodón, on June 9, 1981, in San Juan.

Borges knew well the poet Leopoldo Lugones, who in 1913 delivered a series of anti-Sarmiento lectures at the Teatro Odeón in Buenos Aires arguing that the wealthy *criollos* of Argentina should model their national identity on gaucho culture—a bizarre suggestion, since the rich *estancia* holders had thrown the native peoples and gauchos celebrated in Hernández's epic off their land. At odds with Lugones for much of his life, Borges eventually grew to admire him deeply. Even as the older poet's nationalism developed over time into outright fascism, Borges dedicated his book of poems *El Hacedor* (The Maker), from 1960, to him. Another important early influence was his father's friend Evaristo Carriego, killed by tuberculosis at 29 and a bitter enemy of Lugones throughout his short life. In 1930 Borges would write a set of biographical essays celebrating Carriego and his musical poetry drawn from the barrios of Buenos Aires. The varied "poems of the night" gathered here by Kristal continually evoke not only Borges's blindness and reflections on death but also the lively world of Carriego. "Street With a Pink Corner Store," "St. John's Eve," "Almost a Last Judgment" and other poems reveal the insomniac Borges walking the shadowy streets of Buenos Aires all night, bringing news of the dusk to the dawn.

A lifelong admirer of the philosophy of Berkeley and Schopenhauer, Borges had little time for either empiricism or the conventions of realism. As he continually drew on legends, attenuated out of a vanished origin and stating realities that may or may not be true, he also turned to dreams, which at least brought him the paradoxical certainty of not being true—except when they came true, as he so often believed they so often did. He therefore particularly loved legends of dreaming, such as the story of the Chinese philosopher Zhuangzi, who dreams he is a butterfly and awakens to find he is himself, and then wonders if in truth he is Zhuangzi who dreamed he was a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming he is Zhuangzi. And he liked to cite the long poem "The Conference of the Birds," by the Persian mystic Farid ud-Din Attar; in it a group of birds traverse seven valleys in pursuit of the Simurgh, king of all birds. They gradually discover "they are the Simurgh and that the Simurgh is each one and all of them." Themes of the inter-relatedness of all beings and all destinies, of the other becoming the self, seemed to both frighten and console Borges throughout his life.

He testified that he was haunted from early childhood by three nightmares: the mirror, the mask and the labyrinth. He writes in "Mirrors," also translated by Reid, of the anxieties of proliferation that such reflections produce:

I look on them as infinite, elemental
fulfillers of a very ancient pact

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to multiply the world, as in the act
of generation, sleepless and dangerous.

In a poem from 1942, "Of Heaven and Hell," here in a translation by Reid, Borges describes the terrible overdetermination of the beloved's, and one's own, face:

When Judgment Day sounds in the
last trumpets
and planet and millennium both
disintegrate, and all at once, O
Time,
all your ephemeral pyramids cease
to be,
the colors and the lines that trace
the past
will in the semidarkness form a face,
a sleeping face, faithful, still,
unchangeable
(the face of the loved one, or,
perhaps, your own)
and the sheer contemplation of that
face—
never-changing, whole, beyond
corruption—
will be, for the rejected, an Inferno,
and, for the elected, Paradise.

Ambivalence toward doubles and reflections, a fear of an end to time, anxieties regarding authenticity: these are the emotions behind his nightmares. But mirrors, masks and labyrinths are also human artifacts—for Borges they are Daedalus-like feats of man that hold the capacity to destroy him.

The sole recurring natural image in these poems is the changing light of the sun and moon. Beyond the blindness he inherited from his father and grandmother, which eventually left him with only a sense of the sunrise and sunset colors of yellow and orange, Borges indeed seems to have been raised in an atmosphere of twilight. His biographer Edwin Williamson notes that the long boulevards of Buenos Aires even today open onto extraordinary vistas of the changing sky, but that at the time of Borges's residence in the city, the pampas were all the closer and the sunsets all the more magnificent. In "Afterglow," thoughtfully translated by Kessler and relying on the English title Borges took from a suggestion by his early translator and champion Norman Thomas di Giovanni, we find the real sunset's capacity for unreality:

The sunset is always moving
however gaudy or impoverished it is,
but even more moving
is that last, desperate glow
turning the plain rust colored
once the sun has at last gone down.
It hurts us to bear that strange,
expanded light,
that hallucination infusing space
with unanimous fear of the dark,
which suddenly ends
when we realize it's an illusion,
as dreams end
when it dawns on us we're dreaming.

For many English readers, Borges remains a master of short fiction. And it is often said that after he suffered a concussion in his late 30s that required a long hospitalization, Borges abandoned his early poetic output to write stories—only to stop writing stories and take up poetry again in 1952. In fact, he continued to write poems and to revise his earlier work, albeit at a much slower pace, throughout the 1940s and '50s, and he continued to arrange all his writing in echoing, if often paradoxical, frames: the poetry books move from stanzaic to strophic to prose-poem forms with an exacting attention to tone and subject; the *ficciones* could as easily be published as prose poems. Greater length does not result in less lyrical effect, and Borges's tankas, inscriptions and haikus could readily be torn from the pages of his stories. Here, for example, are two from *Poems of the Night*, both translated by Kessler:

The endless night
is now nothing more
than a scent.

The man has died.
His beard doesn't know.
His nails keep growing.

Kristal writes that Borges said he was happy his Argentine editor agreed to publish a new book of his poems every time he could come up with thirty new pieces, implying he cared little about the thematic and formal unity of his poetry collections. But this seems like more faux apologetics, for it is evident that Borges gave his poetry books distinctive themes and structures, and the editors of the two Penguin collections inevitably must rearrange and hence obscure that dimension of his work. For example, the two new volumes contain only one poem from Borges's elegant book *Para las seis cuerdas* (For Six Strings), from 1965, made up of eleven *milongas*, the syncopated dance lyric form that played a part in the development of tango. *El otro, el mismo* (The Other, the Same), from 1964, contains many of Borges's portrait poems and brings forward the ways the mirror's estrangement can be mapped upon the turn from the octave to the sestet in the sonnet. In poem after poem, Borges seems to stare into his shaving mirror and see into a face from the pageant of so many poet predecessors—here is "Readers," translated by Reid:

Of that gentleman with the sallow,
dry complexion
and knightly disposition, they
conjecture
that, always on the edge of an
adventure,
he never actually left his library.
The precise chronicle of his
campaigning
and all its tragicomical reversals
was dreamed by him and not by
Cervantes
and is no more than a record of his
dreaming.
Such is also my luck. I know there is
something
essential and immortal that I have
buried
somewhere in that library of the past
in which I read the story of that
knight.
The slow leaves now recall a solemn
child
who dreams vague things he does
not understand.

Reid, like most of the poet-translators working on the Penguin projects, does not follow the rhyme scheme of the Spanish, but he aptly shows how Borges stretches a sentence over each of the first two quatrains before the abrupt half-line statement at the volta: "*Tal es también mi suerte*" (Such is also my luck). The turn of sonnet after sonnet of this period is an identification that results in a loss of identity—a glance in the mirror instantly fogs into the face of someone else. "My life, which I do not understand," he writes in "Compass"; he concludes "Texas" with a couplet that declares, "Here too the never understood,/ Anxious, and brief affair that is life." And his devastating sonnet portrait of Ralph Waldo Emerson, here translated by Mark Strand, ends by describing the Transcendentalist poet/essayist meditating on his success and fame:

He thinks: I have read the essential
books
And written others which oblivion
Will not efface. I have been allowed
That which is given mortal man to
know.
The whole continent knows my name.

Then Emerson seems suddenly to realize "I have not lived. I want to be someone

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

else." Here, too, Borges ingeniously exploits the resources of the sonnet form, using clipped phrasing to show a change in the pace of thought but also easing along the rhyming sounds of "*Por todo el continente anda mi nombre;/no he vivido. Quisiera ser otro hombre*" while the last line breaks open and severs the meaning of what has preceded it.

The sonnet has a long and complex history in Spanish literature; the Sicilian form adapted by Dante and Petrarch was practiced by the Marqués de Santillana in the early fifteenth century, but his work was barely known. It was not until the early Renaissance writers Juan Boscán and Garcilaso de la Vega developed a hendecasyllabic Spanish version that the Italian sonnet mode was adopted with some fluidity, especially in the poems of de la Vega, who borrowed the erotic and mystical effects of Arabic traditions, on the one hand, and the courtly love conventions of Provençal traditions, on the other. During the Baroque period, Luis de Góngora explored an elaborate metaphysical style, while Francisco Quevedo analogously stretched the sonnet's content. Quevedo became a poetic hero to Borges, for his imagery was both historically exact and strikingly original. The Argentine devotes most of an essay on the general topic of "Poetry," included in his 1980 book of essays *Seven Nights*, to an analysis of a single Quevedo sonnet; and one of his early sonnets, "To an Old Poet," addresses Quevedo directly, adapting his Petrarchan form to incorporate a quotation from a Quevedo poem that is the source text.

Borges wrote in "Poetry," "Quevedo followed the difficult form of the Italian sonnet, which required [as many as] four rhymes. Shakespeare followed the easy form of the Elizabethan sonnet, which required two." Like so many of Borges's aphorisms, this is in truth a self-ironizing commentary, for it was Borges who introduced and explored the English sonnet form in Spanish literature. Of the more than 400 poems Borges published in some fourteen books, about a quarter were Shakespearian sonnets—a fit number, since Borges was one-fourth English in his descent from his Northumberland grandmother, Fanny Haslam.

Haslam taught Borges to read in English and led him to Stevenson, Kipling, Sir Walter Scott and above all the epic literature of the Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians. If you listen to recordings of Borges's Norton Lectures, delivered at Harvard in the winter of 1967–68, you can hear his tentative, slightly upticking Spanish-inflected English syntax; but when he recites any lines of poetry in English, he becomes a true descendant of the border country: he drops a key, unfailingly rolls his R's and expresses the meter with great passion. From an early age Borges was also taken with Walt Whitman's poetry. His biographer Williamson expresses surprise that when Borges arrived at the wake of his bitter rival, Oliverio Girondo, who years before had taken off with Borges's great love, Norah Lange, he kissed the corpse on the forehead. Devoted readers of Whitman, though, will see in that gesture the perfect re-enactment of Whitman's "Reconciliation." Is it Borges or Whitman who kissed the enemy?

Kristal points out that there is not yet a complete scholarly edition of Borges's work. In the meantime, these beautiful volumes should generate the kind of interest in Borges's poetry that his fictions have long commanded. They can cure cabin fever in the antipodes, and no doubt have some summer powers in store as well. ■

Ghosting History

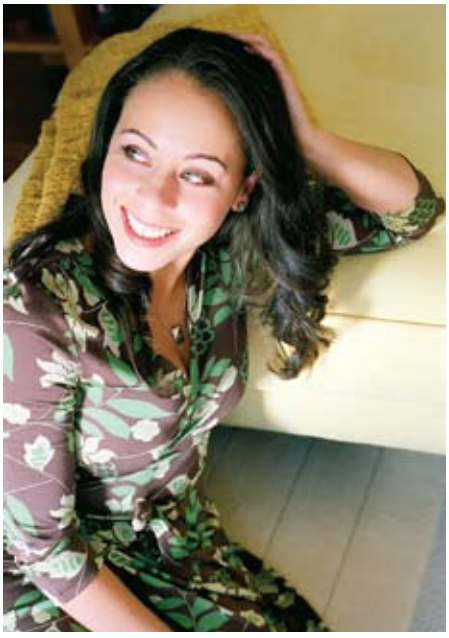
by MADISON SMARTT BELL

In the 1980s I taught an undergraduate student of mixed race; one of her parents was African, the other of European descent. One day she told me how much she resented her parents for having launched her into the world without a clear racial identity, as neither this nor that. At the time, I was struck dumb. The student was fully capable of following through the consequences of such thinking. Would she wish herself out of existence? How bad could it be?

Now well into the twenty-first century, "we" (or at least some of us) like to believe we are living in a postracial society. "We" believed that Barack Obama would lead us to that happy situation, or that, by electing him president of the United States, we had proved to ourselves and the world that we had already arrived there. More recently, as the national mood has soured, images hoisted by some of the president's opponents—Obama with a bone through his nose, Obama in whiteface—have reminded us that we are not as securely settled in a postracial society as some of us would have liked to think.

In the United States the notion of a superior or at least dominating white majority has, statistically speaking, already washed out to sea, though the change has little to do with the descendants of Africans brought here as slaves. The majority of the US population will soon be minorities. Moreover, social categories of race increasingly fail to match genetic data, as in the case of Wayne Joseph, a black-identified man who discovered through a service of DNA Print Genomics that he was "57 percent Indo-European, 39 percent Native American, 4 percent East Asian—and zero percent African." Clearly, we are already living in a postracial society. Our problem is that we don't do it easily. As Mariah Carey told the London *Observer* earlier this year, "How many times do I have to tell you—my father was black. My mother's white. In this country that makes you black, do you understand?"

Rachel, the protagonist and sometime narrator of Heidi Durrow's novel *The Girl Who Fell From the Sky*, is the child of an



TIMOTHI JANE GRAHAM

Heidi Durrow

The Girl Who Fell From the Sky
By Heidi Durrow.
Algonquin. 264 pp. $22.95.

Madison Smartt Bell, a novelist, is the author of Toussaint Louverture: A Biography.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

African-American military man and a Danish woman who met overseas. Rachel spends her early years in the cultural limbo of base housing—happily enough, it appears, until unkind destiny intervenes and she drops into American society, sometime in the 1980s, out of her own peculiarly constructed nowhere. Durrow's novel contains enough malevolent improbability to tax the suspension of disbelief required by Victorian melodrama. Yet to scoff at its plot lines would be unwise, as the story is said to be based on a true one, and while one cannot know which bits are true, it is certain that truth can be more viciously incredible than fiction.

Unbeknown to Rachel until a long time afterward, her oldest brother, Charles, died in a house fire—before her birth. Later Rachel and her two younger siblings are born, or at least conceived; then her mother, Nella, leaves her father to follow to the United States a man who may be the father of Rachel's youngest sister. The next catastrophe is the novel's centerpiece, its details teased out to the bitter end; the mother and all three children take a fall from the roof of their Chicago tenement. Their plunge is the novel's grim narrative bait, but even grimmer is the underlying question: how bad do things have to get (and how do they get that way) to move a parent to kill not only herself but also her children?

Rachel is the sole survivor of the mysterious fall from the Chicago rooftop, and the most successfully rendered and emotionally convincing parts of the novel concern her adjustment to what is, to all intents and purposes, her afterlife. Rachel is taken in by her father's mother in Portland, Oregon, a household that includes her father's sister, Loretta. Grandma "doesn't say anything about my mother, because we both know that the new girl has no mother. The new girl can't be new and still remember."

In her previous existence, Rachel apparently reached the age of 11 without her race being a source of tension. In her new life it becomes an acute one. She is living in a black household, no question. Her school is racially mixed, but the black children don't exactly rush to welcome her. From them she learns that she is "light-skinned-ed. That's what the other kids say. And I talk white." Indeed, she even speaks a little of the Danish her mother spoke at home, and she has her mother's blue eyes. The issue is settled on school picture day. "'Such a pretty black girl,' the photographer says. 'Why won't you smile?'"

Late-breaking discoveries of African ancestry have surfaced in American literature before. Such is the plot line of one of Robert Penn Warren's lesser novels, *Band of Angels*, which takes place during the era of slavery, and ambiguous racial identity has been a theme for many other Southern writers, such as William Faulkner in *Absalom, Absalom!* and *Light in August*. The degree of shock and ensuing identity crisis seem to depend on how long the protagonist has lived in ignorance, how gently or roughly the buried past is discovered and how drastic an effect the discovery may have on the material circumstances of the protagonist's life.

Ely Green was born in 1893, and his seminal work *Ely: An Autobiography*, published in 1966, presents the discovery in nonfiction. Green was born in Sewanee, Tennessee, a privileged mountaintop enclave and university town: "My father was a white man, my mother a so-called Negress." Though his father did not acknowledge him, his white grandparents paid him some attention, and as a young child Ely lived comfortably in another white household his mother had entered as a servant after being made pregnant by one of her previous employers. At Ely's baptism, distinguished white people (including the bishop of Sewanee) became his godparents, and Ely played mostly with white children, with little sense that he was different from them: "I hadn't ever thought anything about race destinction [*sic*]. I knew little about colored children. The word Negro was rarely ever used, or I just didn't pay any attention to it," Green writes. His awakening comes rudely, at a local soda fountain; "the dispencer [*sic*] said: 'I don't make drinks for no nigger.'"

In the beginning his white friends defend him, but before long some turn against him, as if a single racial slur had contaminated the innocence of their whole world. "I did not buy this ball for a nigger to kick," one of his playmates tells him. Ely is moved to ask himself and the white Episcopalians who help raise him, "How could God make a nigger, and why?"

After the death of his mother, Green leaves the white world to join his grandfather, a man born in slavery who was a "scavenger," or junkman, in the town. Green eventually travels all over the viciously racist South of the early twentieth century, spending a good while in Texas and eventually serving in an all-black unit during World War I. Totally reversing the experience of his early childhood, he learns to dislike and distrust white people (there were some exceptions, all very hard-earned). Though he could easily have passed for white, he almost never did so; his book is an early monument to black pride.

Bliss Broyard had a softer landing into the discovery of her black identity than Ely Green. The youngest child of the *New York Times* book critic and editor Anatole Broyard, Bliss was the last to learn that her

Alongside Darwin

The sun is a forerunner of itself.
Picture a black road very early,
Desert mountains to the east,
No trees. As the sun rises,
Blacking then blazoning
The dry slopes, it also
Walks the road to you.

Truth like a canopy shelters truth,
Illusions of combat among the greenflies.
There is no sky. There is only the sun
And the sun's sharp progress
Through the God-forsaken, which is sunlight too.
I hear voices underneath the road.
Whichever way I go was once an ocean.

DONALD REVELL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

father was or had once been "black." Her mother was Norwegian, and her early childhood was spent in Southport, Connecticut, the town where Phil Donahue and Marlo Thomas were refused membership in the yacht club to which the Broyards belonged. At the end of the twentieth century, Broyard's discovery of her black ancestry did not threaten her privileged social position in the slightest, and after all it was only *One Drop*, as the title of her 2007 book on the subject put it.

Bliss Broyard was 23, and her father was on his deathbed, when her mother gave up the secret that Anatole was "part black." At first she wasn't much impressed, but later she looked up a definition of "the 'one-drop rule' that classified as black any American with the tiniest fraction…of 'black blood.'" She found herself flummoxed by the racial categories on a graduate school application derived from the US Census—"white, black, American and Alaskan Native, Asian and Pacific Islander or Other"—and the direction to check only one box. "I was stunned by the revelation that a person could be either black or white but not both…. And if you chose white over black, then—no matter what you looked like or how you were raised—you were passing or ashamed of the stigma of being black or denying your true self. So the 'one-drop rule' still existed."

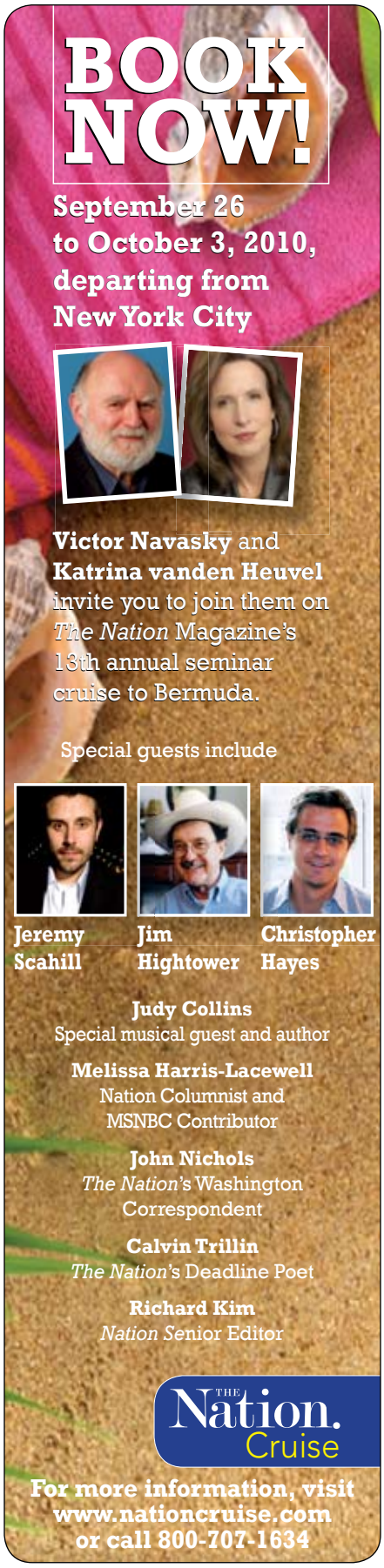
A less naïve and earnest young woman might have shrugged or laughed the whole thing off and gone on with her life without making more than a curiosity of her one drop. Bliss Broyard climbed several high mountains of research and produced a solid 500-page book, which not only fully details her father's evolution from black to white, and her own reflections on that transformation, but is also the most thorough and sensitive analysis to have been written in recent years about the Afro-European society of New Orleans, from its beginnings hundreds of years ago to the present. That was the milieu of Anatole Broyard's origins, where racial identity was not a digital switch and there was a viable third identity between black and white, though it had begun to erode a century before his birth in 1920.

In the French colonies on Caribbean islands and the North American mainland, persons of mixed European and African ancestry were identified as mulattoes or, more politely, people of color. White fathers often acknowledged their children with African women and offered them some material advantages in starting their lives; thus a quite prosperous colored community was founded. The British slave system, on the other hand, followed the one-drop rule. Anyone with as little as a sixteenth part of African blood (one shade beyond any visual evidence in a person's complexion) was defined as black and thus subject to slavery. Most of the United States operated on the same principle.

After the Louisiana Purchase, interracial marriage became illegal in New Orleans. Therefore, in order to marry a mixed-blood woman, the white Broyard ancestor had to pass for black. Such was the Broyard legal status for the next couple of generations, though on the surface of the skin there was little to show it. Bliss Broyard is also an accomplished fiction writer, and in *One Drop* there is a poignant dramatization of the moment where her father, then 17, confronted with a Social Security form, changed his race from "Negro" to "White." Anatole Broyard spent the remainder of his youth in an intellectual bohemia where his racial mixture could remain a sort of public secret—seldom mentioned though fairly widely known. By the time he arrived in Connecticut, though, he was so deeply trapped in his white identity that he could not bring himself to confess his one drop to his younger children before his death.

In *The Girl Who Fell From the Sky* Rachel receives Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* as a gift from her Aunt Loretta's boyfriend, and later is upset by the chapter titled "The Man of Color and the White Woman." Rachel doesn't seem to read anything else in the book. Fanon was born and raised in Martinique, where the three-way French race system obtained, but once he left the islands he found himself in a black-and-white world. Portions of *Black Skin, White Masks*, published in 1952, analyze how the stereotypes of racist stratification irresistibly resurface in cross-racial romances, in ways that are sometimes satirically hilarious but more often exquisitely painful. These issues are pressing for adolescent Rachel, a pretty girl dismayed that she is desired for *what* she is rather than *who* (an experience many women seem to have without any racial overtones). A white suitor coins for her the term of endearment "mocha girl," which Rachel finds seductive until she is revolted by it.

On the surface Durrow's novel is the *Bildungsroman* of a colored girl whose problem is digesting a mixed-race identity. It is tempting to conflate Bliss Broyard with the fictional Rachel, but the fact that one was raised white and the other black is not


BOOK NOW!
September 26 to October 3, 2010, departing from New York City
Victor Navasky and Katrina vanden Heuvel invite you to join them on The Nation Magazine's 13th annual seminar cruise to Bermuda.
Special guests include
Jeremy Scahill
Jim Hightower
Christopher Hayes
Judy Collins
Special musical guest and author
Melissa Harris-Lacewell
Nation Columnist and MSNBC Contributor
John Nichols
The Nation's Washington Correspondent
Calvin Trillin
The Nation's Deadline Poet
Richard Kim
Nation Senior Editor
The Nation. Cruise
For more information, visit www.nationcruise.com or call 800-707-1634

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JESUS was a DEMOCRAT
JESUSWASADEMOCRAT.NET
Spread the word!
For t-shirts, polos, hats and bumper stickers with the above logo, please visit us at:
JESUSWASADEMOCRAT.NET

Act to end the siege of Gaza now.
Help launch the Jewish Boat sailing in July.
American Jews for a Just Peace
www.AJJP.org/JewishBoatToGaza

WWW.THENATIONMART.COM
Nation Mart

the most drastic difference between them. Rachel's deepest reaction to her glance at *Black Skin, White Masks* is to think, "I don't want to be white.... I want to be nothing."

Blood will out; in Durrow's novel, the child Rachel's mother was carrying when she left her black husband turns out to be his, a circumstance that strains relations with the new, presumably white lover in Chicago, who calls the mixed-blood children "little jigaboos." Foreign to stateside racist idiom, Nella must have the ugliness of this epithet explained to her by a third party. There are quarrels nasty enough that the Chicago lover knocks out one of Nella's teeth.

Betrayal into blackness by the child one has borne is a familiar trope of the "tragic mulatto" genre, which possibly reached its apex in 1900 with Charles Waddell Chesnutt's *The House Behind the Cedars*. In 1893 Kate Chopin contributed "Désirée's Baby," a brief but surprisingly durable story that features a maternal murder-suicide. The dire secret forcing itself to the surface of Rachel's story is that her mother tried to kill her, and successfully killed her two younger children along with herself, because of their racial identity: "On that last day Mor took us up to the roof, she had calculated the difference between what we couldn't have and her ability to watch us want. The difference between her pain and ours, she decided, measured nine stories high."

To kill not only oneself but one's children out of the misery inflicted by racism is extreme but not unheard of; however, other reported examples tend to come from slavery time, not our own. Infanticide is the linchpin of Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, published in 1987: having escaped to the North, Sethe assaults her three children and kills the youngest out of terror that the family may be dragged back South to slavery. Sethe's action appears to be a burst of temporary insanity, inexorably provoked by the horror of surrounding circumstances—and the point is to prove just how bad, during slavery time, things not only could be but in fact were.

In *The Chaneysville Incident*, David Bradley manages to make a similarly extreme action appear (against all odds) supremely sane. His masterpiece of a novel, published six years before *Beloved*, is considerably more complex than Morrison's in its approach to history, spanning several generations through the tormented consciousness of a black man of the late twentieth century, who conveniently happens to be a professional historian. Like Durrow's Rachel, Bradley's narrator has to comprehend the inscrutable motives behind the apparent suicide of a parent. The crisscrossed trail leads to a gravesite in rural Pennsylvania where a party of fugitive slaves took their own lives—but not simply or solely to avoid recapture. They acted on an African belief (transmitted to them by one of their number, who came to the United States from French Saint Domingue) that death is not death but a translation of state—a belief that Christian indoctrination diluted but did not expunge. "While it was accepted, for example, that the deceased were no longer in contact with the living, they were still believed to be living—they had simply 'gone home to Guinea.'" In shooting himself on the same gravesite, the narrator's father may not only have believed but possibly can even convince the reader that he is following his forebears to freedom.

Infanticide among slaves in the United States was comparatively unusual, while under the notably harsher conditions of French Saint Domingue (Haiti today) it was so widespread that laws against it were written and people were arrested and tried for breaking them. One such proceeding is the germ of Evelyne Trouillot's novel *Rosalie l'infâme* (2003). In the actual trial, an elderly slave midwife produced a rope belt with seventy knots—each one representing an infant she had released from slavery by taking its life. At the end of *Rosalie l'infâme* a fictional descendant of this midwife flees slavery for the maroon communities of Haiti's mountains, vowing to the child she's pregnant with that "you will be born rebel and free, or you will not be born at all."

So yes, once upon a time it really was that bad, and thanks to writers like Trouillot, we know it. Yet Bradley, more explicitly concerned than Morrison with how history forces itself into the present, won't let the horrors fade away. His narrator at one point realizes that the African view of the afterlife isn't necessarily all that comforting; what it might mean is that "somewhere here with us, in the very air we breathe, all that whipping and chaining and raping and starving and branding and maiming and castrating and lynching and murdering—all of it—is still going on."

Likewise, Durrow's Rachel doesn't want to let us think that it's all safely over. It would be unfair to betray the novel's suspense by revealing exactly what part Rachel plays at the moment when she and her family go off the roof. Some may find it unbelievable, but you'd have to be in her situation—be *her*, that is—to know for sure. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Classified

While we reserve the right to edit, reject or reclassify any advertisement, The Nation *wishes its readers to know we don't have the facilities to check the promises made by our advertisers, and we have a strong presumption against censoring any advertisement, especially if we disagree with its politics. To advertise, contact amanda@thenation.com or call (212) 209-5414. Mail inquiries to* The Nation *Classified Department, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.*

ANCIENT SECRETS

SCHOLARLY BOOKLET PROVES PISO (*aka* Josephus) invented fictional Jesus, Gospels. Amazing but incontrovertible. $15: Abelard, Box 5652 A, Kent, WA 98064.

BLOGS/WEB

JOIN THE FIGHT TO SAVE OUR DEMOCRACY. Actionsources.org takes you to the frontline action organizations that are fighting the treasonous Supreme Court decision that threatens our Democracy. Act now!

AL-QUR'AN'S OWN AMAZING ACCOUNT of Allah's mighty Isa-al Mesiah/Messiah Jesus. Alqasas.net.

WHO ARE WE AS HUMAN BEINGS, and what are we doing here on earth? internalconversations.com.

BOOKS

ESCARGOTPHILES! *30 Escargot Recipes* cookbook. manchinu@aol.com.

THE FAITHFUL: 23RD CENTURY MORALITY. Science fiction fans and political junkies will appreciate this prescient mystery novel. No wars. No weapons. No corporations. Available now at thefaithful-23rdcentury.com.

LIBERAL LIAISONS

If responding to a Nation Box number, send replies to: Nation Box ___ , The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

FROM SEDUCTION TO FREAKY. The only limit is your imagination. No hidden fees. CC only. (888) 666-2059. fetishphonegirls.com.

FETISHES AND FANTASIES fulfilled. Hot erotic talk with creative, sensuous woman. No limits. Personal, confidential. Call (866) 844-8286.

MATURE, INTELLIGENT CONVERSATION. Erotic, imaginative, independently operated. missaria.com. (866) 454-3763.

AURAL EROTICA. Well heeled, well spoken, not always well behaved. Fetish friendly, smart & sexy. (800) 717-LIZZ (5499); ElizabethPaxton.com.

GREEN SINGLES. Free photo ads for progressive singles in the environmental, vegetarian and animal rights communities. Searchable listings for friendship, dating, marriage. Since 1985. greensingles.com.

GENTLE, QUIET WIDOW. 70, petite. Enjoys outdoors, cultural and community events, gardening, reading, PBS, cooking, classical music, photography, eco-travel. Homeowner, under-consumer. Almost noncomputerized. Seeks gentleman, 68-plus with similar interests, to share companionable, slower-paced lifestyle. Reply Nation Box 862.

MERCHANDISE

MERCHANDISE

Talk Back Tees

Liberal quotations, wit & wisdom, hand-printed on colorful, 100% cotton tees
talkbacktees.com (800) 777-9242

EXPRESS YOURSELF! Stickers, shirts, buttons, emblems and more—evolvefish.com. (800) 386-5846 for catalog or to order now.

SUPPORT *THE NATION* AND OUR NATION! Shop online at thenationmart.com and exercise subtle and not-so-subtle dissent. Most items are union-made. Great gifts!

CAT LOVERS AGAINST THE BOMB: 2010 wall calendar. $8.95 + $1.75 postage. Cats & Peace: what more could you want in a calendar? Order from: CLAB-NC, PO Box 83466, Lincoln, NE 68501, or toll-free (877) 778-3434, or catcal@aol.com.

ORGANIZATIONS

SEATTLE *Nation* discussion group invites you to join us. E-mail billcnecessary@gmail.com.

NEW *NATION* ASSOCIATES DISCUSSION GROUP forming in Southwest Kansas (Hugoton). Contact: Jack Golding (620) 428-5647 or golding6231@yahoo.com.

ST. LOUIS *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP invites you to join us every fourth Sunday of the month. For information, e-mail tnova@swbell.net.

LANSING, MICH., *Nation* discussion group is looking for new members. We also would like to link up with any progressive discussion groups meeting in Michigan and assist anyone throughout the state seeking to establish a *Nation* discussion group. Contact: richardc@michcom.net or (517) 627-4591.

SAN FRANCISCO *Nation* discussion group. For information, e-mail evilhess@gmail.com.

NASHVILLE, TENN., *Nation* discussion group. Contact Howard Romaine. hromaine@gmail.com.

BERKELEY, CALIF., *Nation* discussion group. E-mail prehend@gmail.com.

SAN JOSE, CALIF., discussion group meets the fourth Sunday of the month, 1 to 3 PM, downtown. Contact Lois at loisaalbq@yahoo.com for more info.

ASHEVILLE, NC, *Nation* discussion group forming. Contact mgibney@unca.edu.

THE SPOKANE/INLAND NORTHWEST *Nation* discussion group: PO Box 293, Cheney, WA 99004; locus29@aol.com.

SAN ANTONIO *Nation* discussion group. Second Mondays, Grady's Bar-B-Q at San Pedro and Jackson Keller. Contact lenwheeler@satx.rr.com for more information.

RICHMOND, VA, *Nation* discussion group is seeking new members. Contact Wayne Young, (804) 232-8521, youngwayne88838@aol.com.

A NEW *NATION* UTAH YAHOO GROUP has been created at groups.yahoo.com/group/thenationutah. To join, contact Sam Evans, (801) 791-8089 or sameritech@yahoo.com.

ORGANIZATIONS

A NEW MADISON (WIS.) *NATION* DISCUSSION GROUP will be meeting one Sunday afternoon a month. Interested in participating? Contact Helen Aarli, h.aarli@earthlink.net or (608) 244-0787.

DOVER, DEL., *Nation* discussion group is forming. Contact Bruce Dudley if interested, (302) 697-6057.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

SAN FRANCISCO PSYCHOTHERAPIST. Anxiety, depression, relationship issues. Near USF. Sliding scale. (415) 289-6990. paulabranchholt.com. Paula Holt, LCSW.

REAL ESTATE

LEFT COAST, US. Work with The Realtor Who's on Your Side. Norma J.F. Harrison. (510) 526-3968. (866) 264-9029. NormaHa@pacbell.net.

SANTA FE: PROGRESSIVE REALTOR® seeks same in clients. Peter Kahn, Santa Fe Realty Partners. (505) 690-4840 cell, (877) 982-6207 toll free, or peter@peterkahn.com.

TRAVEL

ATTENTION CHAUTAUQUANS: Summer vacation! Three-, four- and seven-day visits. Day passes, two-room suites, breakfast/parking and shuttle. Chautauqua Suites and Expo Center. Call (716) 269-7829 or visit chautauquasuites.com.

SAVETHECHOCOLATE.COM: Ancient cacao threatened by hybrid invasion! Help stop it. Tour Nicaragua's cacao harvest, October/November.

Events

NATIONAL

New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco

As we face mounting world crises, British author Benjamin Creme offers good news. Throughout history enlightened teachers appear to help humanity take the next step forward. Now, led by Maitreya, the World Teacher, they have returned to inspire us to create a new era based on sharing and justice, where all people have food, shelter, healthcare and education as basic human rights. Free talks by Benjamin Creme in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Info: share-international.us, (888) 242-8272.

SPAIN

Mondragon, Spain

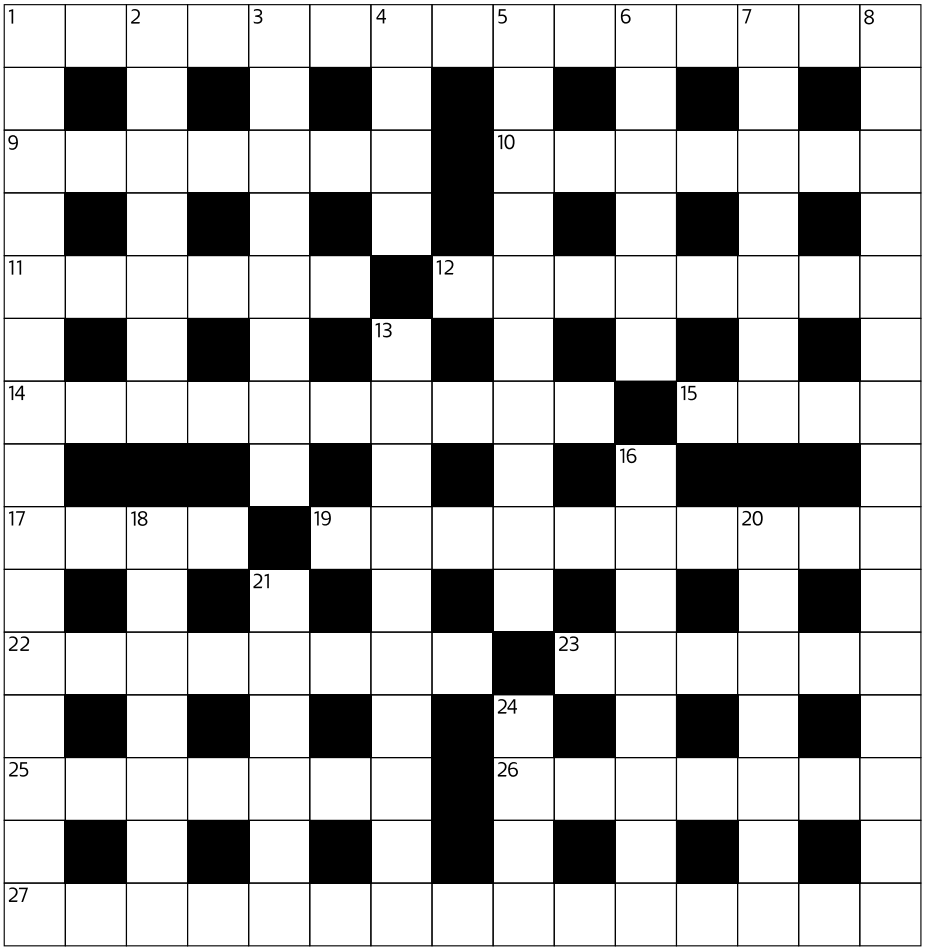
■ September 12–18. Experience the inner workings of the most successful consortium of cooperatives in the world! Rooted in education and sustainable social values, the Mondragon Cooperatives embody a democratic model of economics for the twenty-first century! Five-day seminar/tour organized by Praxis Peace Institute. Info: praxispeace.org/conference10, or call (707) 939-2973.

The advertising deadline for Events is every Thursday. Rates: $210 for 50 words; $260 for 75 words, additional words (above 75) $2.00 each. To place an ad, call Amanda at (212) 209-5414.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Puzzle No. 1594

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Far out, when accompanied by brass, reeds, etc. (Mitchell made it a hit.) (4,4,3,4)

9 Not exactly descriptive of a Kentucky rifle, though the old Navy used it. (7)

10 Seen in Ankara, China and Pakistan as well. (7)

11 Got out of the draft. (6)

12 Literally, 50 in a sort of natural relationship. (8)

14 In one little shake, a classical hero might suggest a sour principle. (6,4)

15 It might suggest 13 down. (4)

17 and **4** down Doesn't work so, with standard shift. (4,4)

19 Their withdrawals are probably complete, with a nice short possibility. (10)

22 Wished so hard for strange things here? (8)

23 Take the cover off. (6)

25 With it, a reel change can be made right where the picture is made. (7)

26 Not a very big point, but you'll get really out of sorts when in pawn, as they say. (7)

27 Was Jerome writing about the shipboard crowd? (5,3,2,1,4)

DOWN

1 Writer of "My USA" and "Upstage" (in translation). (3,2,10)

2 Hurried up at great speed to do what 1 down did, on paper. (7)

3 They once made light of this, though the source might be something like Moby-Dick. (5,3)

4 See 17 across.

5 Use the stairs to leave, in case of panic. (4,6)

6 A bug in the listener's receiver? (6)

7 Be disposed to bow. (7)

8 Carson was evidently told to go it alone, with such equipment. (2-2-8,3)

13 Ocean navigation for the chicken, perhaps. (4,6)

16 Sore throat might cause the fruit and everything to come up! (8)

18 In the stag show, it might make the color rush up. (3,4)

20 Even the best players are a little shaky with it. (7)

21 Hope to make a point? (6)

24 One from Anna's old country might make a hit. (4)

This puzzle originally appeared in the August 2, 1975, issue.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1593

R	O	U	N	D	T	A	B	L	E	■	C	H	U	B
A	■	N	■	O	■	N	■	I	■	M	■	A	■	E
I	N	F	E	R	N	O	■	N	E	E	D	I	N	G
N	■	U	■	E	■	T	■	I	■	S	■	R	■	I
C	U	R	E	■	P	H	E	N	O	M	E	N	O	N
A	■	L	■	B	■	E	■	G	■	E	■	E	■	T
T	A	S	T	I	E	R	■	S	C	R	A	T	C	H
S	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	■	■	I	■	■	■	E
A	I	R	P	O	R	T	■	D	I	S	T	U	R	B
N	■	U	■	C	■	E	■	R	■	T	■	S	■	E
D	I	S	C	U	S	S	I	O	N	■	B	E	R	G
D	■	S	■	L	■	S	■	P	■	S	■	L	■	U
O	X	I	D	A	T	E	■	O	F	T	H	E	E	I
G	■	A	■	R	■	R	■	U	■	E	■	S	■	N
S	I	N	G	■	W	A	I	T	A	N	D	S	E	E

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the second week in January, and biweekly the third week of July through the second week of September) by The Nation Company, L.P. © 2010 in the U.S.A. by The Nation Company, L.P., 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. (212) 209-5400. Washington Bureau: Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington, DC 20002. (202) 546-2239. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries: The Nation, PO Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235, or call 1-800-333-8536. Publications Mail Agreement No: 40041477. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Bleuchip International, PO Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2. Canada Post: Publications Mail Agreement No.: 40612608. When ordering a subscription, please allow 4-6 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions. Basic annual subscription price: $79 for 47 issues. Back issues $6 prepaid ($8 foreign) from: The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. The Nation is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Nation, PO Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. Printed in U.S.A. on recycled paper.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Join the only phone company that supports progressive causes with every call.

SWITCH TO CREDO MOBILE AND GET A CONTRACT BUYOUT CREDIT + 10% OFF YOUR MONTHLY SERVICE FEE FOR 2 YEARS*

credomobile.com/thenation **call 888.331.1683**

offer expires August 1, 2010 mention special offer code: 500536

CREDO™ mobile

more than a network. a movement.

*All with two-year CREDO Mobile service agreement. Offer subject to credit qualification. Offer only available to new CREDO Mobile customers. Contract buyout credit: We will credit your CREDO Mobile account (up to $200 per line, up to 3 lines) after you send us the contract buyout credit form, with proof of your prior carrier's termination fee charges; details to follow by mail. BlackBerry®, RIM®, Research In Motion®, SureType®, SurePress™ and related trademarks, names and logos are the property of Research In Motion Limited and are registered and/or used in the U.S. and countries around the world. © 2010 CREDO

LICENSED TO CUNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IMAGINE PEACE

love, yoko ono
www.IMAGINEPEACE.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED